



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

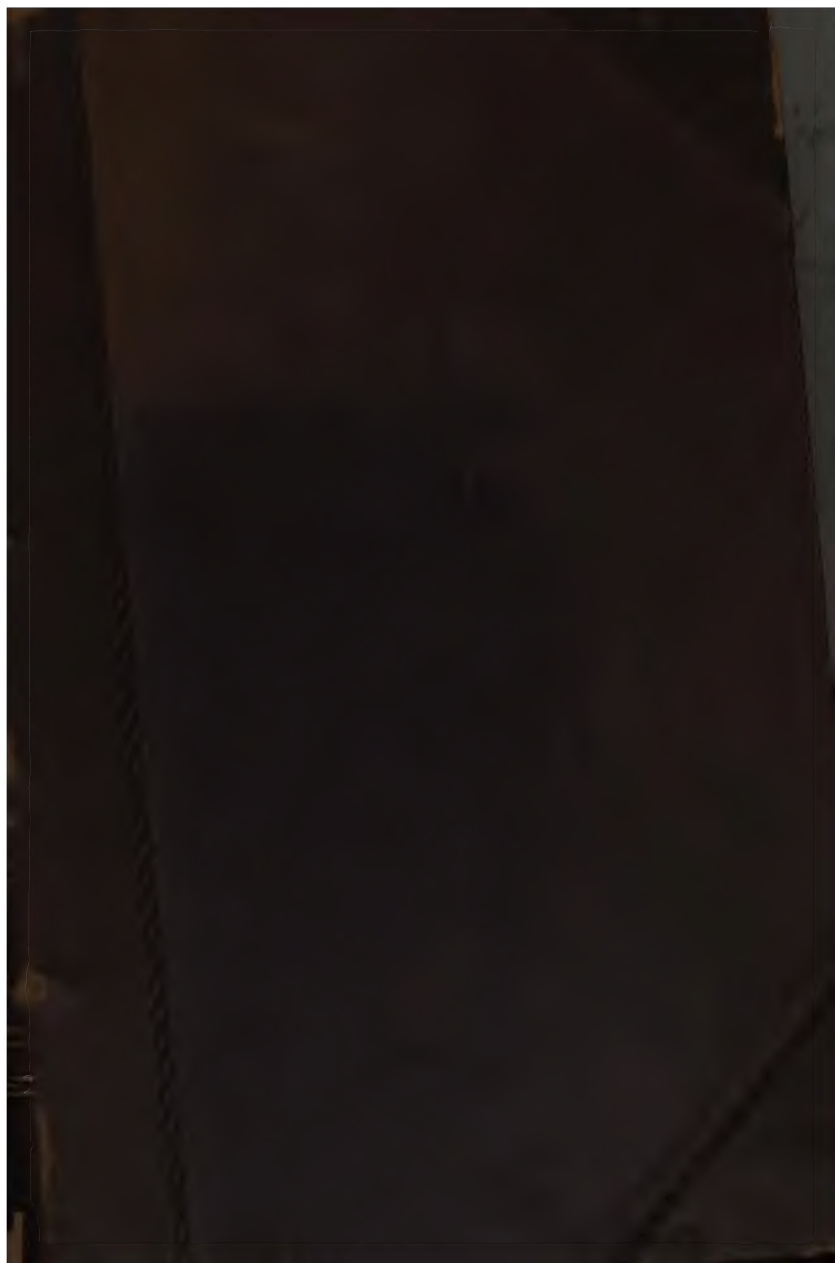
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

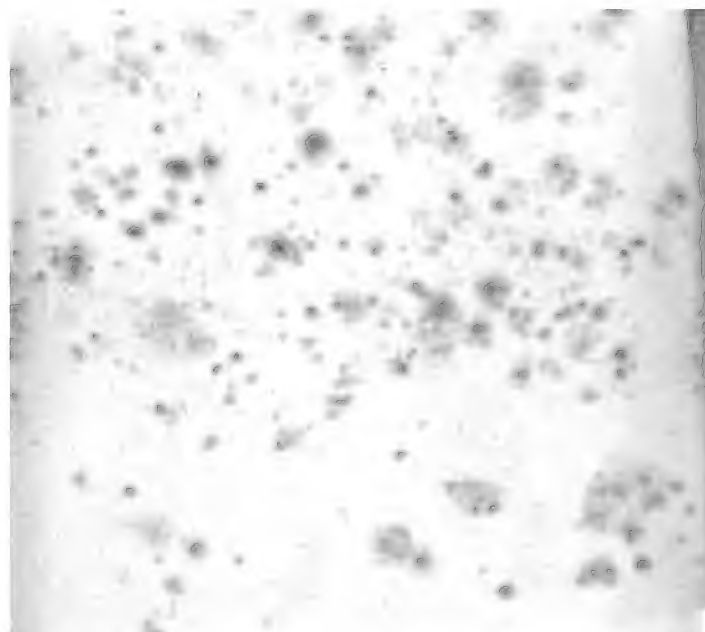
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600107984Z







Stories and Lessons

On the Catechism

With the First-class Girls of Forley.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"STORIES AND CATECHISINGS ON THE COLLECTS."

EDITED BY
THE REV. W. JACKSON, M.A. OXON,
CURATE OF ST. JOHN'S, BODLE STREET GREEN, SUSSEX.

VOL. III.



LONDON:
J. AND C. MOZLEY, 6, PATERNOSTER ROW ;
AND J. H. PARKER, OXFORD.
1856.

138. d. 285.



STORIES AND LESSONS

ON THE

CATECHISM

WITH THE FIRST-CLASS GIRLS OF FORLEY.

LESSON LXII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

‘TWO ONLY.’

‘WE shall have no more stories from Mrs. Hamilton,’ said Rose to her companions, as they walked together up to evening school.

‘Why not? Is she going away?’ asked several.

‘Yes,’ returned Rose; ‘she goes away to-morrow morning. It is some business of Mr. Hamilton’s which makes them go away so suddenly. Mr. Spencer was at Mother’s, and told us so to-day. They only heard about it this morning, and have to go off to-morrow.’

‘Well, I am sorry!’ exclaimed one or two. ‘It won’t seem natural without her now.’

‘I suppose she’ll say good-bye to us this evening,’ said Anna.

‘I suppose she will; but she has not had time to go round to say good-bye to anybody. You know they have been at Ilsham all day.’

‘Oh, yes! I saw *them* drive past this morning,’

exclaimed Alice, 'but I didn't know they had gone for the day.'

'Then will Miss Walton be home to teach us now?' asked Jane.

'Yes; Mr. Walton wanted her to give it up,' said Rose, 'but she said she did not like to disappoint us, and they should be obliged to be home in good time, to let Mrs. Hamilton pack her things, and therefore we might come for a short lesson. I heard that when I went about the fly for Ilsham, but I didn't know then they were going to-morrow.'

'That was like Miss Walton!' cried Emily; 'she always gives us school if she can.'

'I am sure she'll be tired to-night,' said Margaret.

The girls were not mistaken in thinking Mrs. Hamilton would say good-bye that evening. Just before they left, she came into the room, and saying a few kind words to them, hoped they would all continue to value their present means of instruction, and bade them good-bye.

By the following Sunday the girls had become accustomed to see Miss Walton alone again, though at first, among themselves, they had pitied her very much.

In the afternoon they came to the Vicarage for their lesson.

'Of what does the Catechism teach us, in the part we have now come to, girls?' asked Miss Walton, when they had repeated it.

'The Sacraments,' replied several.

Miss W. Yes; we have been taught in the Creed that God, by His Son, has redeemed the world, and we have professed our belief in this great work of redemption; but now we are taught of the channels which God has appointed to convey its benefits to us—how we can be united to Him in Whom alone is salvation, and be made partakers of the benefits of *His death*. And how is it?—By what outward means?

Rose. The Sacraments.

Miss W. And ‘how many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in His Church?’

All. ‘Two only, as generally necessary to salvation, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.’

Miss W. Christ, then, has ordained or appointed how many Sacraments?

Anna. Two.

Miss W. And what are they?

Alice. ‘Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.’

Miss W. We sometimes hear the Holy Communion spoken of as ‘The Sacrament;’ is it more of a Sacrament than Baptism?

Some said ‘Yes,’ some ‘No.’

Miss W. No; they are both equally Sacraments, ordained by Christ, as we shall see when we come to the explanation of the word ‘Sacrament;’ and as this answer also teaches us. For, when I ask ‘How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained?’ you do not say one, but—

‘Two,’ they all replied; ‘Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.’

Miss W. Ought we, then, to call one of them ‘the Sacrament,’ more than the other?

All. No, for they are both Sacraments.

Miss W. We may speak of the ‘Sacrament of Baptism,’ or the ‘Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper,’ but not of either as *The Sacrament*, as though there were no other, or one stood higher than the other; for we believe that there are—how many?

Alice. Two only.

Miss W. What was it that flowed out of the pierced side of our Blessed Saviour?

‘Blood and water,’ said Agnes. (See St. John, xix. 34.)

Miss W. Yes, typifying the two Sacraments. Which does the water typify?

‘Baptism,’ said one or two.

Miss W. Why?

Margaret. Because we are baptized in water.

Miss W. And which does the blood typify?

Rose. The Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes, where, in taking the wine, we 'spiritually drink'—?

'The Blood of Christ,' said several.

Miss W. And thus the two Sacraments, as it were, come from the side of Christ, and unite us to Him. And what are we further taught of these two Sacraments? That they are—?

Emily. 'Generally necessary to salvation.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'generally necessary?' I think you have often been told.

'Usually necessary,' said some.

'Necessary when they can be had,' said Rose.

Miss W. Yes, Rose, you are right. They are God's appointed means for conveying the grace whereby we are saved, and, therefore, necessary to salvation. Yet, when they *cannot* be had, God may save without them. Do you remember when the Israelites were bitten by fiery serpents, what means God appointed for their healing?

'He told Moses to make a serpent of brass, and set it on a pole,' replied several, 'and the people were to look at it, and then they should be healed.' (See Num. xxi. 7-9.)

Miss W. What, then, was the appointed means of recovery?

Agnes. Looking at the serpent.

Miss W. But supposing any had refused to look, saying, that to look at a piece of brass could do them no good, or that it was too much trouble to go to the place where it was set up, what would have been the consequence?

'They must have died,' replied the girls.

Miss W. Yes; and who alone would have been to *blame*?

All. Themselves.

Miss W. Just so; because they would have turned away from the means of healing which God had appointed. And what has God appointed as the means of grace unto salvation for us?

All. Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Miss W. And if we despise, or wilfully turn away from them, the consequence must be—what?

Mary. That we cannot be saved.

Miss W. But supposing some man severely bitten by a serpent had earnestly desired to use God's appointed means, and look on the serpent of brass, and yet had been unable to crawl so far, or found the crowd so great, he could not see it, do you think his recovery would have been impossible?

'No; God might have made him well without,' said Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; God might have healed him without the usual means, though, to look at the serpent was 'generally necessary' to the healing of a sick man. So, if it be impossible to obtain Baptism, or the Lord's Supper, what do we believe?

Margaret. That God can save without them.

Miss W. I have read an account of one of the soldiers who was leading St. Alban to martyrdom being converted on the way, by St. Alban's words and behaviour, to the Christian Faith. He immediately professed his belief, and was martyred along with the saint, without the possibility of being baptized. Such an one the Church has ever believed to be undoubtedly saved. He was, as it were, baptized in blood; and as it was by no fault of his own that he died without the 'washing of water,' God could give the blessing without the appointed means. But supposing he had not been martyred, what would his duty have been?

Anna. To seek for Baptism.

Miss W. Exactly; and if he had failed either from

carelessness or indifference, then he must have lost the blessing of salvation. In those times it was not always easy to obtain Baptism at once, and many must have died without it who truly repented and believed. St. Alban himself, it is said, was only just baptized when he was seized and led to martyrdom. And the Church by saying that the Sacraments are—what?

‘Generally necessary to salvation,’ they all replied.

Miss W. Yes; the Church, by these words, would teach us not to doubt of the salvation of such as these; while she tells us that we cannot wilfully neglect the Sacraments without endangering our salvation, because they are God’s appointed means of grace unto salvation, and therefore necessary to salvation. What means did God ordain for the healing of Naaman’s leprosy?

Ruth. Washing seven times in the river Jordan. (See 2 Kings, v.)

Miss W. Was he willing to use the appointed means?

Several. No, he went away in a rage.

Miss W. And so long as he despised the means appointed for his recovery, did the leprosy leave him?

Several. No, not till he went and washed.

Miss W. If he had not humbled himself, and obeyed the direction, and sought for his cure in the appointed way, he would have gone home still a leper. So, if we neglect to use, or despise, the ordained means of grace, we must not expect that cleansing, without which we cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven, or that nourishment, without which we cannot live the heavenly life. Now can you give me any texts which teach us that Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are necessary to salvation? First, of Baptism.

Rose. ‘Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily,

verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ (St. John, iii. 3.)

Miss W. Our Lord’s explanation of these words makes His meaning still plainer. What is it?

Margaret. ‘Except a man be born of *water and of the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ (Verse 5.)

Miss W. And when, after St. Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, the people asked, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ that is, what shall we do to be saved? what did he answer?

Jane. ‘Repent, and be *baptized* every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’ (Acts, ii. 38.)

Miss W. Thus we see that Holy Baptism is necessary to salvation, because it is God’s appointed condition—a means whereby we receive grace unto salvation. Now can you give me any text which speaks equally plainly of the Lord’s Supper? Margaret, I think you can.

Margaret. ‘Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have *no life in you*. Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.’ (St. John, vi. 53, 54.)

Miss W. The appointed means, then, of being raised up at the last day, for the consummation or completion of our salvation, is—what?

Anna. Eating and drinking the Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. And when are they taken by the faithful?

Several. In the Lord’s Supper.

Miss W. Can you tell me when our Lord appointed Baptism?

Agnes. Just before His Ascension. ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in

the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' (St. Matt. xxviii. 19.)

Miss W. To whom were these words spoken?

Several. The Apostles.

Miss W. And St. Mark's account shows us how necessary Baptism is. What does he say?

Sarah. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' (St. Mark, xvi. 16.)

Miss W. Thus our Lord appointed Baptism as a Christian sacrament. Baptism, or washing, had indeed been used among the Jews before. They baptized all Gentile proselytes, and we read in the Bible of another Baptism—whose?

Jane. St. John the Baptist's.

Miss W. Yes; and even heathens used divers kinds of Baptism to expiate their crimes. So our Blessed Saviour adopted an outward sign already known, and one well suited to typify the grace given; for what were the waters of Jordan a means of doing for Naaman?

'Healing him,' said some.

'Cleansing him,' said others.

Miss W. And which Sacrament is appointed for our healing or cleansing?

Emily. Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, when—what is poured upon us?

Several. Water.

Miss W. The word 'Baptism' comes from a Greek word, which means to dip, or to wash. And what do we believe is washed away in the Sacrament of Baptism?

Sarah. Sin.

Miss W. What do we pray God in the Baptismal Service to do for the child? Do we say anything about washing?

Several. 'We beseech Thee, for Thine infinite mercies, that Thou wilt mercifully look upon this

child; *wash* him and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. And what do we ask in the next prayer?

Rose. 'The everlasting benediction of Thy heavenly washing.'

Miss W. Thus also it is spoken of in the Bible. Look at Tit. iii. 5.

Harriet. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the *washing* of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Or *bath* of regeneration, as it might be rendered. And why does St. Paul say Christ gave Himself for the Church?

Anna. 'That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the *washing of water*,' &c. (Eph. v. 26.)

Miss W. What did David pray God to do for him? (Ps. li. 2.)

Several. 'Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.'

Miss W. And so God has appointed, as a means of cleansing our souls from sin—what?

All. The washing of Baptism.

Miss W. Where the outward washing typifies the spiritual washing which God there vouchsafes to us. Can you now tell me when the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained?

All. Just before Christ was crucified.

Miss W. At what feast?

Emily. The feast of the Passover.

Miss W. What was done at the Passover?

Rose. A lamb was killed and eaten.

Miss W. In remembrance of what?

Margaret. Of the first Passover, and the Jews' deliverance from Egypt.

Miss W. The feast of the Passover was a perpetual memorial to them. At what time of the day was the lamb killed? Look at Exo. xii. 6-8.

Jane. 'The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. . . . And they shall eat the flesh in that night.'

Miss W. And when did our Lord appoint His Supper?

Several. In the evening, while keeping the feast of the Passover.

Miss W. And for this reason it is called—what?

Mary. The Lord's Supper.

Miss W. As the meal of the Passover was called a Supper. Look at St. John, xiii. 2. What are we told was ended?

Jane. Supper.

Miss W. Thus again our Lord made use of a sign to which the Jews were accustomed. He chose water for the sign in one Sacrament, food in the other. In what words did our Lord ordain the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

Sarah. 'Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My Body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' (St. Matt. xxvi. 26–28.)

Miss W. And St. Luke adds His words of command. What are they?

Several. 'This do in remembrance of Me.' (St. Luke, xxii. 19.)

Miss W. And now that we have seen how Christ appointed the two Sacraments, we learn one reason why the Church teaches us that they are—what?

Emily. Necessary to salvation.

Miss W. Yes, for can we neglect what God commands without danger?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Then, since God has commanded us to

observe these two Sacraments—to seek for grace in them—they are—?

‘Necessary,’ replied the girls.

Miss W. We can see their necessity for another reason. When a body of men join themselves into a society, do they not choose some mark to distinguish them from others? Some of your fathers and brothers belong to the county club, do they not?

Several. Yes, Ma’am.

Miss W. And what is their outward mark of fellowship?

Several. A red-and-white scarf.

Miss W. And when do they receive this?

Several. When they join the club.

Miss W. So the Sacraments are marks to distinguish all those who belong to the Body of Christ. And what do all the members of the club do once a year?

Anna. Meet together and dine.

Miss W. They hold communion one with another, and this is necessary to keep up a kindly feeling; so should all the members of the Church hold communion one with another in the Lord’s Supper, and so give token that they are united into one Body. The Sacraments are necessary, then, as—?

‘Marks of distinction,’ said Rose.

‘And as bonds of communion,’ added Miss Walton. ‘As we go on with the Catechism, we shall see many other reasons why they are necessary. Now tell me of which of the two Sacraments do we first partake?’

All. Baptism.

Miss W. What does our Lord connect with Baptism, in His conversation with Nicodemus?

Agnes. A new birth.

Miss W. Quite right. It comes first, then, as being the Sacrament of our birth. Into what are we born?

'God's family,' said Mary.

'The Church,' said others.

Miss W. But is this enough for our salvation? If a little child, as soon as born, were left without food, could it live?

All. No, it would soon die.

Miss W. What, then, do we need besides new birth for our salvation?

'Food,' said some.

'Nourishment,' said others.

Miss W. Therefore, what did our Lord appoint should follow Baptism?

Anna. The Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes, whereby we are—?

Several. Nourished, fed.

Miss W. One Sacrament He ordained for our birth, the other for our nourishment and growth; and both, we learn, are 'generally'—?

'Necessary to salvation,' they replied.

Miss W. Can you tell me whether, in the Jewish Church, there were any types of the Sacraments? First, of Baptism. How did the Jews enter into covenant with God?

Several. By Circumcision.

Miss W. And how do Christians enter into the new covenant with God?

Agnes. By Baptism.

Miss W. Then, in the Jewish dispensation as a whole, what typified Baptism?

All. Circumcision.

Miss W. It typified, but hardly represented, because the blessing of Circumcision fell so far short of the blessings of Baptism. Then, in the *wilderness*, was there any type? Through what did the Jews pass on entering the wilderness?

Sarah. The Red Sea.

Miss W. What does St. Paul call this passage *through the Red Sea*? 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

Harriet. ‘Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.’

Miss W. Then he calls it—?

Rose. A Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, through which they passed on entering the wilderness, on their journey to Canaan. So we pass through Baptism at the beginning of our journey through—what?

‘This world,’ said Mary.

Miss W. Yes, on our way to the heavenly Canaan. Does our Baptismal Service mention this type?

Several. Yes, Ma’am; and Noah in the ark, too. (See first prayer in Baptismal Service.)

Miss W. Yes. And now of the Lord’s Supper. Was there any permanent institution among the Jews a type of this Sacrament?

‘Please, Ma’am, was the Passover?’ asked Rose.

Miss W. Yes, Rose; when the Paschal lamb was killed and eaten. And in the passage through the wilderness, was there any type? Could they go through the wilderness without food?

Several. No; God sent them manna. (Exod. xvi.)

Miss W. And how did He provide water?

Margaret. Out of the rock of stone. (xvii. 1-7.)

Miss W. St. Paul says, They ‘did all eat’—?

Mary. ‘The same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.’ (1 Cor. x. 3, 4.)

Miss W. Thus the manna, the heavenly food, and the water from the rock, by which they were strengthened and refreshed, were types of—?

Several. The Body and Blood of Christ, by which our souls are strengthened and refreshed.

Miss W. And do you think that if any of the

children of Israel had refused to go through the Red Sea, but tried some other way, they would ever have reached the land of Canaan?

All. No, Ma'am.

'For God would not have been with them to guide and take care of them,' added little Agnes.

Miss W. And could they have found any other food and drink but that which God provided for them?

Mary. No, for they were in the wilderness.

Miss W. True. So, if we would reach heaven, our land of Canaan, what washing must we go through?

Rose. The spiritual washing of Baptism.

Miss W. And if we would be strengthened and refreshed to reach our journey's end—if we would not die in the wilderness, what must we eat and drink?

Margaret. The spiritual food of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Yes, we must not despise or neglect the means of grace God has appointed for our salvation. And the principal means we believe to be—?

All. Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Miss W. Quite right. The two Sacraments generally necessary to salvation, ordained by Christ Himself.

Presently she continued,

'Now I will not ask you more questions to-day, for I have a story to read to you, which was sent me by a friend a few days ago. She thought I should like to read it to my class, she said.'

Miss Walton reached from the book-case a gaily bound little book, and opening it, read the title.

THE ELDER SISTER.

'ARE you nearly ready to come and sit down, Katharine?' asked a thin, sickly-looking woman, as she sat by the window, with a large Bible on her knee, trying to catch the last gleam of light. The question was addressed to a girl of about eighteen years old, who just then came down-stairs, after putting to bed a tribe of little ones.

'Yes, Mother,' she replied, 'I am quite ready now. What do you want?' she asked, as she took up a child's pinafore upon which she was working, and sat down by her mother.

'I want to talk to you, Katharine,' replied her mother. 'I don't think you can see now to work, and I have wanted to talk to you, my girl, for some time past, but I have not had the heart to say what is on my mind.'

'What have you to say, dear Mother?' asked Katharine, laying down her work, and struck by her mother's manner.

'I want to give you some directions what to do when I am gone, my child,' said her mother, as calmly as she could. 'I don't think I shall be here much longer.'

'Oh! Mother, don't say so,' cried Katharine; 'when baby is born, I am sure you will be better.'

'You had better be prepared for the worst, Katharine,' replied her mother, tenderly. 'I don't think I shall ever get well again, and when I am gone, much will depend upon you, my girl; and, perhaps, a little baby will be added to your cares. You are the eldest, and all will look up to you, and even your father's comfort will depend upon you.'

'Oh Mother!' said the poor girl, bursting into

tears, 'how can I bear it? You know how hard I find it to do right by Father now, when you are here to help me; how can I do without you?'

'That is one thing I most of all wanted to talk to you about, now that we are alone, so don't take on so; try, my lass, do try and talk quietly.'

With a great effort, Katharine drove back her tears, and taking her mother's hand in hers, she said,

'I won't cry now, Mother.'

'I wanted to say to you that you must try, when I am gone, to bear with your father's temper, and to show him honour, whatever his conduct may be. I know how hard it is; but it is your duty, for he is your father, and has worked for you all his life. When I was young, my temper was like yours, and it was hard for me to keep back a saucy answer, and to bear unjust angry words spoken to me; but I have had to bear them, and God has helped me, and He will help you, too, if you really try. I know you do try often, but you must try more when I am gone, and there is no one else to do anything for him.'

'Yes, Mother, I will try,' she answered, in a broken voice. 'How did you learn? for you never answer Father sharp now.'

'I'll tell you, Kate, if you think it will help you. I once heard a sermon on the words, "Blessed are the meek," and I began to think that I was not meek, but very easily made angry; and I thought, with shame, over the hasty words I had spoken to your father, and how his fault-finding ruffled my temper, and I made a resolution that I would learn to be silent when he tried me—that if I felt angry, I would not speak, and then I prayed God to help me. But I soon found the difficulty was to remember, so I took this means. Whenever I heard the clock strike, I repeated the words, "Blessed are the meek," and

prayed, "Help me, O Lord, to remember these words," and thus kept my resolution more in my mind. When I saw him, it would come to me, and then God helped me to be silent, though it was very hard for some time. This was the first step. But sometimes I found that my silence vexed him, and yet I was afraid to begin to speak again. But one day, when I was at the Holy Communion, while the others went up to the altar, I was reading about our Saviour standing before the High Priest, how He was silent at first, but when bidden to speak, then He spoke gently; and I thought He set me an example, and that I must learn to speak gently, as well as to be silent; and so I prayed God then, at His holy table, to give me grace to do so, and to follow the example of Christ our Saviour; and God did not fail me, Kate. He never will fail us if we seek Him through His own appointed means. I don't mean that I learned all at once. I had often to confess my failings, and to pray Him again to help me; and for a long time this was the chief thing for which I prayed when I went to the Holy Communion. I asked for grace to be meek, and at my daily prayers I asked the same; and so, by degrees, I learnt to speak gently; and I thought how our Saviour not only spoke gently, but prayed for those who misused Him, and reviled Him, and so I prayed more for your poor father; and whenever he is most cross to me, I try, as soon as I can, to pray for him. I know, my girl, I often fail still. I am weak in myself, but, as far as I have been able to conquer my temper, it has been by using the means God has appointed for us—by prayer, and the Holy Communion, and thinking over His words; and if you, my Kate, will do the same, God will surely help you.'

'Thank you, Mother,' said Katharine, as Mrs. Fenning stopped speaking, exhausted by the effort.

'I will indeed try; but you must not talk more; you are quite tired.'

'I shall be better directly. I must tell you all that is on my mind now; perhaps this will be the last opportunity.' She waited a moment, and then continued,

'If I don't get better again, will you promise me to have the little one baptized as soon as possible? Perhaps it may not live. Do not let it die without Baptism, if possible.'

'Very well, Mother. If it is ill, I will send at once for Mr. Benson,' said Katharine; but it was with difficulty she spoke.

'And be kind to your brothers and sisters, and teach them to show honour to their father. Be a mother to them when I am gone. Charles is quick tempered, like his father, but he knows it is wrong. You must help him to overcome it.'

'Oh! Mother, how can I help him?'

'By your example, most of all,' she replied. 'And look here; I have marked some passages here in my Bible for him; show them to him when I am gone, and tell him that my last prayer for him was, that God would give him grace to be kind and gentle.'

As Mrs. Fenning spoke these words, a long-drawn sigh of pain made both her and Katharine start and look round, and at the same moment a fine-looking boy of fourteen stepped from behind her chair, and, throwing himself upon his knees, he put his arm around his mother, and sobbed aloud.

It was so nearly dark, and both Mrs. Fenning and Katharine were so intent upon the conversation, that neither of them had observed Charles's entrance, their backs being towards the door. He had come in gently, and hearing his mother speaking, with the idea of not interrupting her, he had placed himself behind her chair, and heard much that she had said, with difficulty restraining himself; but at the words,

‘When I am gone,’ unable to repress his grief longer, he thus threw himself upon her. Boy-like, though he knew his mother was ill, he had never realized that the illness might end in death; and now, the truth thus suddenly brought before him was more than he could bear. It was some time before his mother could comfort him; but at length, on Katharine’s saying,

‘You will make Mother more ill if you cry so much; do, Charlie, stop,’ the effort was made, and still kneeling at his mother’s side, and with his arm around her, he listened to her words of advice and direction. After talking much longer than she ought to have done, she concluded by saying, ‘And now, my dear children, I have but one thing more to say; love each other, and help each other all you can. You, Charles, are old enough to be a comfort to your sister; and you, Katharine, must try to be a mother to him and all of them; and remember, both of you, that you cannot do your duty either to God or man unless you seek for His help and grace, in His own appointed means, by daily prayer, by reading the Bible, and attending Church and the Holy Communion. You will soon be old enough, Charles, to be confirmed; remember your mother’s last words, and be sure you do not turn away from the Lord’s Supper afterwards. It is as much necessary to your salvation as Baptism, and you cannot wilfully neglect it without great danger.’ Then, taking up the Bible and Prayer Book, which lay near her, she handed one to Katharine, and the other to Charles, saying, ‘I give these to you, my dear children, as a remembrance of me. I have used them long, and found their value. Whenever you look at them, think of my words to you this evening, and of your promises to me. And now may God bless you both,’ she said, as she joined their hands together in her own, and kissed first one and then the other.

Katharine, too, had sunk on her knees, and her face was now buried on her mother's shoulder, while Charles, in the same position, knelt on her other side. Neither of them spoke or moved when their mother stopped speaking, and their sobs were hushed, though tears filled their eyes. They knelt for some moments, and perhaps breathed an inward prayer that they might have grace, in their after lives, to follow that mother's example.

They were roused, however, by approaching footsteps, and both exclaimed at once, 'There's Father coming!'

Katharine hurriedly rose and stirred up the fire, but before she could get a candle alight, her father was in the cottage, angrily inquiring what they were doing in the dark, why his supper wasn't ready, whether they expected him to slave for them all day, when they idled their time in that way. As long as he spoke to *them*, both Charles and Katharine, without much difficulty, kept silence, while they tried as quickly as they could to prepare the tea; but when he turned and began to scold his sick wife, saying, that if she couldn't work she might make her children do it, and not encourage them in such idleness, their cheeks began to burn, and it was scarcely possible to restrain their indignation.

'I am sorry,' replied Mrs. Fenning; 'I believe it was all my fault, but you are home earlier than usual, I think.'

This gentle answer did not in the least appease the angry man's wrath, and he went on finding fault with one thing after another.

Her mother's words, however, still rang in Katharine's ears, and helped her to keep silence; and Mrs. Fenning sent Charles to look for his brothers, who had not yet come in, and so got him out of the way of temptation.

He soon after returned, accompanied by Richard

and James, who were younger than himself, and his sister Helen, who was a year older, and was apprenticed to a dress-maker. Little, however, was said in their father's presence, and they were glad, one by one, to say good-night, and go to bed.

LESSON LXIII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE OUTWARD SIGNS.

'How many Sacraments did you say, last Sunday, there were?' asked Miss Walton.

Several. 'Two only.'

Miss W. Now tell me, 'What meanest thou by this word *Sacrament*?'

Anna began to repeat, 'I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us,' when Miss Walton stopped her, saying,

'You said that wrongly, Anna; try again.'

She obeyed, but without better success.

'You try, Ruth,' said Miss Walton, as she sat next to Anna. She stood up, but made the same mistake; then Jane, Sarah, Bessie, and Emily tried, all unsuccessfully.

'I don't wish to tell you what you do wrongly,' said Miss Walton. 'I wish you to find out and correct yourselves. Now all of you look at the answer, and see which can say it correctly.'

'Please, Ma'am,' said Rose, without having turned to her book, 'I think I can say it.'

'You may try,' replied Miss Walton; and she stood up and repeated slowly,

'I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. Very well, Rôse. Now what was the difference, girls?

'The comma,' said little Agnes; 'the others put one in after *grace*, and Rose didn't.'

Miss W. Quite right. Now do you all see the difference? Anna and the rest of you said, 'I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace—given unto us.' Was that right?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Then now say it rightly, Anna?

'I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, &c.' she now repeated.

Miss W. I hope you will none of you forget this, for you destroy the sense by putting in a comma too much. By the word *Sacrament*, then, we are to understand—what is first said?

Several. 'An outward and visible sign.'

Miss W. Of what?

Mary. 'An inward and spiritual grace given unto us.'

Miss W. What two things do we learn about the sign?

Margaret. That it is outward and visible.

Miss W. And about the 'grace given unto us?'

Several. That it is inward and spiritual.

Miss W. Can we see that which is spiritual?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. The inward and spiritual grace, then, is invisible. And the *outward* sign signifies—what?

Rose. The inward grace.

Miss W. And the visible—?

'The invisible spiritual grace,' said one or two.

Miss W. And what more do we say of the sign?

Emily. That it is 'ordained by Christ Himself.'

Miss W. To be—what?

Several. 'A means whereby we receive the same.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'the same?'

Anna. 'The inward and spiritual grace.'

Miss W. Yes; the outward and visible sign is ordained by Christ, not only to be a sign of 'grace given unto us,' but—?

Sarah. 'A means whereby we receive the same.'

Miss W. Just so; 'the same' inward and spiritual grace of which it was the sign. And what else is it?

All. 'A pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. To assure us of what?

Rose. 'The inward and spiritual grace.'

Miss W. Yes. The outward and visible sign is both a means whereby we receive grace, and a pledge to assure us that we *do* receive it. Thus we see a Sacrament consists of—how many parts?

All. 'Two; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.'

Miss W. And the outward sign in a Sacrament is not only a sign, but—?

Margaret. A means and a pledge.

Miss W. Of what?

Mary. 'The inward and spiritual grace given unto us.'

Miss W. Very good. You have taken pains over your answers, and show me that you understand the construction of this answer which we must take for our lesson to-day. Now I should like to see how far you understand the words. What does 'visible' mean?

Several. That which we can see.

Miss W. The sign is outward and visible, something which we can all see without difficulty. What is it that is outward and visible?

All. The sign.

Miss W. And what do you mean by 'a sign'?

'A mark,' said one or two.

Miss W. It rather means something which *presents itself* to the senses, and something *else* to the

mind or understanding. But I am afraid that is too hard a meaning for you, yet I think you can understand it if I give you examples of what I mean, and you pay attention. I said it was something which presents *itself* to the senses. What do I mean by the 'senses'?

Rose. Hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, and feeling.

Miss W. Very good. Now a thing may present itself to the sight or hearing; but to be a *sign*, it must bring something else to our minds, not that which we see or hear. For instance, when it rains, and the sun shines, what do we often see in the sky?

All. A rainbow.

Miss W. You *see* the rainbow; it presents itself to your *sight*. But what does it present or bring to your *mind*?

Mary. God's promise not to destroy the world.

Miss W. And so it becomes a sign that the world shall be no more destroyed by a flood. Or when a school-bell rings, what do you hear?

Anna. The sound.

Miss W. Yes, the sound presents itself to your hearing; but what does it tell you beyond the fact that the bell is being pulled?

Several. That it is school-time.

Miss W. Then what is the bell to you?

Rose. A sign to go to school.

Miss W. But what sort of a sign do you say is the sign of a Sacrament?

All. 'An outward and *visible* sign.'

Miss W. Then it does not present itself to the *hearing*, for you cannot see a sound; but—?

'To the *sight*,' said Sarah.

Miss W. You shall have one or two more examples, that you may quite understand what is meant by a *sign*. Look at Judges, vi. 36–38.

Harriet. 'And Gideon said unto God, If Thou

wilt save Israel by mine hand, as Thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that Thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as Thou hast said. And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.'

Miss W. Now what presented itself to his sight in the morning?

Emily. The fleece full of dew.

Miss W. But what did it convey to his mind?

'It made him sure that God would be with him,' said Ruth.

Miss W. Very good, little Ruth. Then it was to him a—?

'Sign,' they all answered.

Miss W. Yes; for he *saw* the dew, but it assured him of God's presence with him, and that Israel should be saved by his hand. The next day, the thing presented to his senses was changed, by his own request. What did he ask?—That the fleece might be—?

'Dry,' they replied, 'and the dew only on the ground.'

Miss W. And it was so. Then when he saw and felt the dry fleece, it made him sure God would deliver Israel by his hand. And once more, the red-and-white scarf which you spoke of last Sunday, worn by the members of the county club—what is it?

Several. A sign.

Miss W. Of what?

Rose. That those who wear it belong to the club.

Miss W. Yes; a red-and-white scarf presents *itself* to what?

All. Our sight.

Miss W. But the knowledge that he who wears it is a member of the club to—what?

Several. Our minds.

Miss W. Exactly. Now I think you will understand me when I say, A sign is that which presents *itself* to the senses, and *something else* to the mind or understanding. You must keep this in memory when we come to speak of the sign in Sacraments. But I have something more to say about signs yet. What makes the red-and-white scarf a sign of belonging to the county club?

Sarah. Because it has been fixed upon.

Miss W. Yes; it is not the nature of a red-and-white scarf to bring the county club to people's mind. It only does so because—?

'It has been chosen,' they all replied.

Miss W. So it is with other signs. It is not in the very nature of the outward part to bring to mind something else; it only does so because it is appointed to do so. Why is the rainbow a sign to us that God will not destroy the world by a flood?

Several. Because God said it should be.

Miss W. And why did the wet fleece assure Gideon that God would be with him?

Rose. Because God heard his prayer, and let it be a sign.

Miss W. Yes, because it was appointed. So what do you say of the outward and visible sign in a Sacrament?

Agnes. That it is ordained by Christ Himself.

Miss W. Yes, ordained to signify the inward spiritual grace given unto us. But once again. Something more is necessary before an outward visible thing is a sign of an inward invisible one. If you had never heard that the red-and-white scarf had anything to do with the county club, would you know it?

Several. No, we must be told.

Miss W. And if you had never heard of the flood, or of God's promise and appointment of the rainbow, would it bring to your minds any assurance of safety from a flood?

Anna. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Then, in order for a thing to present itself to the senses, and bring something else to the mind, it must be appointed for that purpose; and what else?

'People must know about it,' replied one or two.

Miss W. Yes; they must know what it has been chosen to signify, or it is no sign to them. So, in order for water, and bread and wine, in the Sacraments, to be signs to us, we must know—we must be instructed in—what they signify; and this the Church does for her children in this part of the Catechism, after first telling us that there are—how many Sacraments?

All. 'Two only, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.'

Miss W. And then explaining what is meant by the word Sacrament. What is it?

Several. 'An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. Yes; then she gives fuller explanations. What do you mean by 'grace'?

Rose. Favour.

Miss W. I think that is as good a single word as you can give. For all that has been done for us, all the benefits that we receive by the holy Sacraments, are favours, or gifts, or grace. But what sort of grace do the signs signify?

Several. 'Inward and spiritual grace.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'spiritual'?

Rose. Belonging to the Spirit.

Miss W. Yes; spiritual grace is grace given by

God's Spirit to our spirits, and is, therefore, invisible, inward. And what do you mean by 'ordained'?

Emily. Appointed.

Miss W. Or fixed upon. Who do you say, Alice, chose, or fixed upon the outward signs of the inward grace of the Sacraments?

Alice. Christ Himself.

Miss W. Yes, and so gave them their efficacy. We saw, last Sunday, that it was He who said, 'Except a man'—?

Jane. 'Be born of *water* and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'

Miss W. And afterwards commissioned His disciples, 'Go ye, therefore'—?

Ruth. 'And teach all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' (St. Matt. xxviii. 19.)

Miss W. Baptizing them, or washing them. I told you the word 'baptize' comes from a Greek word, which means—what?

'To dip, or wash,' said one or two.

Miss W. And we also saw, last Sunday, that when Christ said, 'Take eat; *this* is My Body drink ye all of it; for *this* is My Blood,' He first—?

'Took *bread*, and blessed it, and took the *cup*, and gave thanks,' replied Margaret.

Miss W. The cup which contained the wine; (see St. Matt. xxvi. 29;) and, therefore, we say 'ordained by'—?

Several. 'Christ Himself.'

Miss Walton took out her watch, and finding time going quickly, she said, 'I think I shall tire you if I ask you any questions to-day about the signs in the Sacraments being both means and pledges, but I should like you to tell me whether you can learn anything from our lesson thus far. Is there any harm in being ignorant of what the red-and-white scarf signifies?'

‘No, Ma’am,’ they replied, with some tone of surprise in their voices.

Miss W. But if a child belonging to the town school were ignorant that the bell was a sign that school-time had come, would she be quite blameless?

Several. No, for she might have found out. She couldn’t well help knowing.

Miss W. Therefore ignorance would be all the more blameable. Are *we*, then, who have the means of learning, blameless, if we neglect to hear what God’s appointed signs signify? You all come to school; you may learn, if you are attentive, and take pains, what God would teach you by His outward and visible signs, and you will have to answer for your neglect if you do not take the pains to learn. But worse still is it if, being told their meaning, we do not believe it. If a child hears the school-bell ring, yet will not believe that it is time for school, what would she deserve for being late?

Several. Punishment.

Miss W. And how could we be guilty towards God in the same way?

Rose. By not believing the signs He appoints.

Miss W. There are few, I trust, very few, who are thus guilty. We know the Jews were. When they asked for a sign from heaven, what did Jesus answer?

Anna. ‘An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly: so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.’ (St. Matt. xii. 39–40.)

Miss W. He blamed them for seeking a sign, yet He told them of one: but did they believe it? Did they believe He would rise from the dead?

Mary. No, Ma’am, for they set a watch at His grave, lest He should be stolen away.

Miss W. And after He rose, and had fulfilled the sign, did they believe in Him?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. And awful has been their punishment, teaching us to beware how we refuse to believe in the signs God gives us. But there is one danger for us all: that is, lest knowing the meaning of the signs, we do not heed them,—lest when the thing is represented to our sight, we let it convey no meaning to our minds. What should the water of Baptism remind us of?

Agnes. The washing away of sin.

Miss W. And what should the bread and wine in the Holy Communion remind us of?

Several. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. But if we forget this, we are guilty of not heeding God's signs. Now when Mrs. Thorp's little baby was baptized, a few Sundays ago, how many of you, when the water was sprinkled on her face, thought of the inward washing away of sin? Some of you, I am sure, did not, for you whispered, 'How pretty the baby looks!' You knew what the water signified. What would you have said if you had been asked?

'The washing away of sin,' said one or two.

Miss W. Yes, you knew it, but you did not heed it; and yet the Church teaches us not only to let the sign signify to us the new birth of the little infant, but remind us of the inward and spiritual grace given to each one of us. For what do we thank God just before the first address to god-parents?

'We give Thee humble thanks,' read Emily, 'for that Thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of Thy grace and faith in Thee.'

Miss W. And then what do we pray?

Emily. 'Increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore.'

Miss W. Then the water should not only signify

to us the inward and spiritual grace given to the infant, but remind us of—what?

Several. The grace given to each one of us.

Miss W. Yes; and if it does this, and makes us thankful for it, and stirs us up to the more diligent use of it, we shall never see the sign in vain. It is not only that we may offer up prayers for the little infant, that the Church appoints the performance of Baptism in the congregation, but also that we may be benefited ourselves, that the outward and visible sign may—do what?

Agnes. Remind us of the inward and spiritual grace given unto us.

Miss W. I hope, then, you will try always to be thoughtful and attentive, so that when the outward sign is brought before you, you may see signified the inward and spiritual grace, and not be guilty of shutting your eyes to the signs God in mercy gives, as did the Jews of old.

After a moment's pause, Miss Walton said, 'I think our lesson has been long enough; Emily, you may reach that gay little blue book, which is on the third shelf.'

Emily rose quickly to reach it, while Ruth whispered to Alice,

'I am so glad we are to hear more.' At the same time Miss Walton, happening to turn towards Agnes, noticed that she looked very white.

'Are you not well, Agnes?' she said; but, before she received an answer, the child sank down against Margaret, almost fainting away.

Miss Walton immediately rose, and, taking off her bonnet, laid her on the sofa, bidding one of the other girls go for a glass of water. Emily was gone in an instant; but before she returned, Agnes was better. She was very apt to turn faint, and had that day rather hurried up the hill, thinking she was late. A few drops of salvolatile in the water now quite re-

vived her; and, though Miss Walton would not let her get off the sofa, she was able to attend to the story as she lay there, still looking pale, but with all the faintness gone.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

It was not a fortnight after this conversation when Katharine might again have been seen towards evening striving to hush an infant to sleep, while near her, on the floor, sat a little boy whom she called Willie, amusing himself by pulling some flowers to pieces, making a sad litter; and by her side, on two chairs, lay a little girl, just turned of four, fretting a good deal, for she was not well. Katharine looked very tired, as, with the baby in her arms, she walked up and down, and then stood by Kezia's temporary bed, and tried to comfort her.

'I'll take you as soon as ever I can, but you wouldn't like me to lay poor baby down to take you. She would cry if I did, and she is too little to know she must not cry.'

'I wish she would go to sleep, then,' said Kezia, fretfully tossing down the shawl with which she was covered, and sitting up with her hair all ruffled, and cheeks burning: 'I'm so tired.'

'Then do lie still, like a good child, and I'll make some nice tea for you soon.'

Kezia obeyed, for she could not sit up; but hardly was she pacified, when Willie, at the mention of tea, began to teaze for a piece of bread, and to fret when Katharine told him he must wait for his supper, he should soon have it.

But, happily, baby was now asleep; and laying her in her little cot, Katharine was frightened to see how late it was, and that the fire was nearly out for want of mending; the kettle, too, had to be filled for tea, and

she was afraid her father would come in before the water boiled. She felt worried by Willie's fretting, and his following her backwards and forwards as she hurried about to get on with her work.

'Oh! that poor Mother was here!' she sighed to herself; 'she always could keep the little ones quiet;' and the thought of her mother made her eyes fill with tears. But in course of time the fire burnt up, and the kettle was put on, and the hearth swept, and thinking that Miriam, or James, whom she expected in from school every moment, could set the tea-things, she took poor little Kezia upon her knee and sat down by the open door, thinking the air would cool the child's heated head. She felt frightened to feel how hot she was, and again longed that her mother was alive,—she would have known what to do; or if her father would come in, and not be cross, he, perhaps, could tell what was the matter. She remembered, however, her mother's once putting Willie into warm water when he was not well, and she thought it might do Kezia good too; now, however, the child lay with her head on Katharine's shoulder, dropping asleep, and she could not disturb her by getting up to put more water on the fire, so she sat still, thinking of that last happy evening (sad she thought it at the time, but happy now) when she sat in nearly the same seat, by the side of her dear mother, now laid in the cold grave.

Hardly, however, had the sick child dropped asleep, when bang went the garden-gate, and in rushed James, followed by Miriam, shouting out,

'I knew I'd be in first. I say, Kate, is supper ready?'

'Oh! see what you've done, children; how naughty you are,' cried Katharine, as little Kezia started up from her sleep, and looked round wildly and frightened. 'You have awoke poor Kizzy, and *she* had only just dropped asleep.'

'How should I know she was asleep?' answered James, saucily; 'I want my tea;' while Miriam stood, looking rather ashamed.

'You knew she was ill, you naughty boy,' returned Katharine, angry at the boy's indifference. 'You don't deserve to have any supper, and you must wait for it. I have something else to do besides have your supper the moment you come in.'

'Then I shall take it, that's all,' he replied, going towards the cupboard.

'But you'll do no such thing,' cried Katharine, jumping up quickly; and laying Kezia on the bed, she followed James to the closet to prevent him; but as she did so, she caught sight of her mother's Bible lying on the top of the drawers—that Bible which she had given to her the last evening; a pledge of a mother's love, and a sign to her to try and do her duty to her father and the children. She saw the book, but it brought other things to her mind. She heard again her mother's words, 'Be kind to your brothers and sisters,' and remembered her own promises. She heard again her mother's blessing, and felt that she was forfeiting it.

Immediately her grasp loosened, and putting her hands over her eyes, she burst into tears, and sinking on a chair, cried, 'Oh! Mother, Mother!' James's hand was on the bread, but now he withdrew it. Miriam crept up to her sister, and putting her arms around her neck, sobbed out,

'I'm very sorry, Katie.'

But for a few minutes Katharine could not speak, grief quite overpowered her; and the two little ones, Willie and Kezia, frightened by what they saw, began to cry too. James stood a moment looking on, and then, to hide his shame, dashed out of the house.

In ten minutes afterwards he might have been seen at his sister's side, while she was once more trying

to comfort little Kezia, saying in a humble tone of voice,

‘Can I do anything for you, Katie? Do you want water fetching from the well?’

She put her arm around his neck, saying,

‘No, I don’t want water, there’s plenty, but go look along the road if Father’s coming. I’m afraid he’ll be here before the water boils; and Miriam,’ she continued, ‘will you set out the tea-things?’

Both the children cheerfully did as they were asked, and Willie was now happy enough, talked to by Miriam.

Kate’s trials, however, were not yet over.

‘I say, Katie,’ said James, running back into the house, ‘I see Father coming; he’ll be here before you can say Jack Robinson. Give me that child, and get tea ready, or you *will* catch it.’

With a sinking at the heart, Katharine gave up her seat and the sick child to her brother, while she hastened the preparation for tea.

But James’s words were true enough; her father was close at hand. It was not, however, the tea not being ready which now angered him.

His first question was, ‘How is Kizzy?’ the one child to whom he seldom spoke an angry word.

‘She is very bad, Father,’ returned Katharine.

‘Very bad! and is that the reason you have her at this open door? Are you mad, Katharine, or do you want to kill the child?’ he asked, as he took her from James’s knee, giving the boy an angry push away from him, and felt how hot her hands were, and saw her burning cheeks.

‘I thought the air would do her good,’ said Katharine, as quietly as she could.

‘Thought!’ exclaimed the father. ‘You thought you’d kill the child, and get rid of her, I think!’

As Fenning said these cruel words, Charles and *Richard* entered the cottage together, and the hot

blood mounted into Charles's cheeks as he heard his sister thus spoken to, and he began, 'Father, I say,'—but, ere he got out another word, Katharine's hand was upon his shoulder, and she pointed to her mother's Bible. Charles stopped, and pressed his lips together and was silent.

'Get her some tea directly,' cried Fenning, 'and put her to bed; some of you boys go for the doctor, we shall have the child dead while you stand gaping about.'

'Go, Richard,' said Charles, in a whisper. 'I'll stay with Kate.'

There was, however, little real need to have sent for the doctor, had there been any experienced person in the house or near; but Fenning's cottage stood quite alone, a full mile from any other, at the edge of a common, and not very far from the stone-quarries, at which both he and his two eldest boys worked.

Kezia certainly seemed very poorly, but an experienced person would have seen that it was an attack of measles, which only required care. Fenning, however, was too angry to think what was the matter; and perhaps, even if he had known, he could scarcely have given directions to Katharine what to do.

Now she quietly moved about in obedience to her father, preparing a cup of tea for the sick child, while Charles kept the other children quiet.

For the first few days after Mrs. Fenning's death, there had seemed to be a change for the better in the husband. He was subdued and kinder in his manner to the children, and Katharine had allowed herself to hope that it might continue; and when his temper first broke out again she was unprepared for it, and had answered sharply. From that time he had become as bad as, or worse than ever; and though Katharine had bitterly repented of her first saucy words, she still found it hard, very hard, to be patient. This even-

ing, however, though both she and Charles had much to bear, it seemed as if their mother's spirit were hovering around them. Her Bible, which lay before them, was a sign to them to watch themselves; and, by the grace of God helping them, they were enabled to meet his anger in silence, and to do meekly that which he required of them so roughly.

The doctor arrived in the course of a couple of hours, and set their minds at ease by pronouncing Kezia to be suffering from measles, not fever, as they had feared.

In the course of the night the rash fully came out upon her, and she was then better; but Katharine, fearing lest her father should again charge her with neglect, sat patiently watching her through the long hours of the night, and when all was quiet round her, she was able to think over her mother's lessons, to make resolutions for the future, and to pray God to help her.

It was about three o'clock when Charles gently crept up to her and begged to take her place, promising to call her if Kezia wanted her, and, weary enough, Katharine lay down and slept.

LESSON LXIV.

THE SACRAMENTS.

A MEANS AND PLEDGE OF GRACE.

MISS WALTON was delayed in coming to the girls' lesson, and they waited for her full a quarter of an hour, but they were talking together, and did not mind. When she did come, taking her seat at once, she said,

'I've kept you waiting long, girls, but I could not avoid it, so now we must begin without more delay, especially if you wish to hear more of the story.'

They repeated a few answers from the Catechism, and then she said,

'We have not yet come to the end of the explanation of a Sacrament. In order fully to understand what we mean, we must go on with the same answer which we took last Sunday: "What meanest thou by this word Sacrament?"'

Alice. 'I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. That is right, Alice; I am glad to see you remember how to repeat it.

Alice's good-tempered face brightened up at this commendation, while it brought the blush to her cheeks.

'Last Sunday,' continued Miss Walton, 'we saw that a Sacrament is—what?'

Ruth. 'An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself.'

Miss W. Yes, of grace—not given unto Angels, or any other creatures, but unto—?

'Us,' they all replied.

Miss W. Yes, as men. But it is something more: it is ordained by Christ, not only to be a sign of grace given, but—what else?

Several. 'A means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. In this it is more than a common sign. Now can you tell me what you understand by 'a means'?

None of the girls answered, though Rose whispered, 'I seem to know, but I can't say it.'

'There is,' continued Miss Walton, 'no one word, I think, (unless it be "instrument,") which will exactly express its meaning; but yet, I think you can understand it. By what means do you get your thread through your work?'

'By means of a needle,' said one or two.

Miss W. And how do you get water to your mouth?

Several. In a cup.

Miss W. Then what is the cup to your drinking?

Agnes. A means.

Miss W. Very good; the cup is that by which the water reaches your mouth; it is the instrument, or means, by which you drink. Or again: when I was a little girl, I remember walking past a prison in Southampton, and my pity being called out by seeing a poor man sitting at a barred window, high up in the prison. From this window he had let down, by a cord, a little box, upon which was written, 'Remember the poor debtor.' There was a hole in the box, like the one in our missionary-boxes, girls, or the poor-box in church, by which money could be

dropped in. I remember begging for something to put in, and my dear mother gave me some pence. I watched eagerly to see the poor man draw up the box, and was much disappointed to be told that he would probably not draw it up until evening.

'Then didn't you see it drawn up, Ma'am?' asked Ruth, with animation.

'No, Ruth, I didn't, though I kept looking back as long as ever I could catch a sight of the prisoner's window; so, I remember, I began to picture to myself the evening when he would draw it up, and hoped he would find a great deal in it. Now why do you think I have told you this story? What did the poor man want?

'Money to pay his debts,' said several.

Miss W. And what was the means of the money reaching him?

'Oh! the little box,' said Ruth.

Miss W. Yes, the box, and the string by which he daily drew it up, were the means of the money's reaching him. Did the box give him the money?

'No!' cried several, laughing.

'People gave it to him,' said Ruth.

Miss W. But it reached him through the means of—what?

All. The little box.

Miss W. Yes, that was the instrument by which the charity of his fellow Christians reached him. Then, when we say the outward and visible sign in a Sacrament is a means whereby we receive grace, what do you understand?

Rose. That it is the instrument by which we receive it.

Miss W. Exactly; as the little box was the means by which money reached the prisoner, and the cup is that by which we convey water to our mouths. But how comes the sign to be thus a means?

Sarah. Because it is ordained by Christ Himself.

Miss W. You told me that God appointed the rainbow for a sign—of what?

All. That He would not destroy the world by a flood.

Miss W. But was it any means of keeping away rain?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No, it was a sign that it would be kept away, but it was no means of keeping it away. But Christ has appointed the outward parts of the Sacraments, not only to be signs of grace, but—?

All. 'Means whereby we receive the same.'

Miss W. In our first lesson on the Sacraments, you gave me several instances of God's appointing means to an end. What were they?

Several. The brazen serpent to heal the Israelites.

Anna. The waters of Jordan to wash away Naaman's leprosy.

Miss W. Very good. Was there any virtue in the serpent of *itself* to heal?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. What made it, then, a means of healing?

Mary. God's having appointed it.

Miss W. And why were not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, as good as the waters of Jordan, to wash away Naaman's leprosy?

Jane. Because God did not appoint them.

Miss W. Then had the water of Jordan in *itself* any power?

All. No, only because God appointed it.

Miss W. Just so. Now what are the outward and visible signs of the Sacraments?

Several. Water; and bread and wine.

Miss W. But has water in *itself* any power to wash away *sin*?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. How, then, comes it to be a means of *doing so*?

All. Because God has appointed it.

Miss W. And again: have bread and wine any power in *themselves* to strengthen and refresh our souls?

Margaret. No, only because Christ has appointed them.

Miss W. Yes; He has appointed them to be the means whereby we receive His Body and Blood, by which our souls are strengthened and refreshed. The whole efficacy, or power, then, of the outward and visible signs in the Sacraments, as a means of grace to us, rests upon—what?

Rose. Their being appointed by Christ Himself.

Miss W. Just so. We look through them to Him; through the means of grace we must look to the Giver of grace. And being thus appointed by Him, we may be quite sure they will not fail of their efficacy, unless it be by our own fault—for they are more even than a means of grace. What else do we say?

All. 'A pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. To assure us of what?

Anna. Grace given unto us.

Miss W. He Who appointed the sign, will not let it be in vain on His part, if *we* use it rightly. By giving us the outward sign, He, as it were, pledges Himself to give the inward grace; and, therefore, we say, 'A'—?

Several. 'Pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. What do we mean by a 'pledge'?

Again the girls did not answer, and Miss Walton said, 'When you go to a pawnbroker to borrow money, what does he expect from you?'

Sarah. Something left with him to show that we will pay it back.

Miss W. Well, that something is a—?

'Pledge,' said one or two.

'Pawn,' said others.

Miss W. Yes, or security. When the pawnbroker sees the garment you have left with him, he feels secure of his money. It gives him a right to ask it of you. So Christ, as it were, has left us pledges to assure us of grace. When we see the outward signs, we may feel sure of what?

‘Grace along with them,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Yes; and they give us, as it were, a right to ask for the grace, for that of which they are left as pledges. What do we say of this in the Communion Service? ‘He hath instituted’—?

‘And ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of His love,’ continued Margaret.

Miss W. What are the pledges in the Lord’s Supper?

Several. Bread and wine.

Miss W. And in Holy Baptism?

All. Water.

Miss W. And these outward signs are appointed and left with us—by Whom?

Harriet. Christ Himself.

Miss W. And so, when we use them rightly, of what may we be sure?

Mary. The inward grace.

Miss W. Therefore they are—?

Several. Pledges.

Miss W. Yes; something left by Christ in the hands of His ministers, to assure, or secure to us grace or favour. They are not only means of grace, but—?

All. ‘Pledges to assure us thereof.’

Miss W. God will never let His words fall to the ground. He has appointed outward signs, and promised that they shall be the means of inward grace given unto us; and, therefore, these signs become to us—what?

‘Pledges,’ said one or two.

Miss W. What was the rainbow, as well as a sign

that God would not destroy the world any more by a flood?

Emily. A pledge.

Miss W. Yes; though not a means, yet something left with us, which assures to us the fulfilment of His Word, as well as a sign of the good promised. Look at Gen. ix. 17.

Alice. 'And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.'

Miss W. That is, it is both a sign that I will no more destroy the world, and also a pledge of the fulfilment of my promise—that which I leave with you, to make you feel sure that my promise shall never fail. So the outward signs in the Sacraments, of the inward grace given unto us, are also—?

All. 'Pledges to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. I think now you understand each word of this answer. By the word Sacrament you mean—what?

'An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us,' said several.

Miss W. Yes; and the outward and visible thing is ordained thus to be a sign, by Whom?

'Christ Himself,' they all answered.

Miss W. And not only is it a sign, but—?

Agnes. A means whereby we receive grace.

Miss W. That is—?

Margaret. The appointed way in which grace comes to us.

Miss W. And something more?

Anna. 'A pledge to assure us of grace.'

Miss W. And by a pledge you mean—?

'Something left with us to secure grace to us,' said Rose.

Miss W. Very good. But the whole efficacy of the outward and visible thing—that which makes it a sign, and a means, and a pledge, is—?

All. Because it was ordained by Christ Himself.

Miss W. Yes; because He willed and appointed that it should be so. He willed that men should have something to look upon, to represent to them invisible grace, therefore He appointed—?

Anna. Outward signs.

Miss W. Yes; He willed that they should be signs, not of grace in general, but grace—?

Ruth. ‘Given unto us.’

Miss W. Therefore He appointed that they should be more than bare signs, that they should be—?

Mary. Means whereby we receive the grace; and pledges to assure us thereof.

Miss W. And thus we come to have Sacraments, ordained by Christ Himself. How many do you say?

Several. ‘Two only, as generally necessary to salvation.’

Miss W. And what are the two?

All. ‘Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.’

Miss W. Then have we been describing only one of these, in explaining what is meant by a Sacrament?

Several. No, both.

Miss W. Yes, as we shall see in taking each separately. We shall find that *both* have outward and visible signs of—?

‘Inward and spiritual grace given unto us,’ they continued.

Miss W. Yes; and we shall find that in *both* the outward and visible sign is a—?

Emily. ‘Means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.’

Miss W. True; the same grace which the outward sign signifies. And you have already shown me that *both* are ordained by Christ Himself. And it is only of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord that we can say all this. Other holy ordinances we have by

which God gives us grace, but two only are *Sacraments* in the strict meaning of the word. Perhaps, girls, sometimes, in reading old books on religion, you may find the word *Sacrament* used to express anything mysterious, or things which we should call signs, as the offering up of Isaac, for instance, and our Lord's miracles. You must not understand the word in this use of it, to mean the same as when we speak of the Sacraments. There are only two Sacraments as generally necessary to salvation, in the strict meaning of the word *Sacrament*, which is given you in the Catechism, and which I think you now understand. As the two Sacraments came, as it were, from the side of Christ, so they are both appointed to unite us to Him. By the Sacrament of Baptism we are made—what?

'Members of Christ,' said Jane.

Miss W. Yes, we are first united to Him. And what does the Church teach us is the benefit we receive in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? Then we spiritually eat—?

'The flesh of Christ,' said Sarah, 'and drink His blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us.'

Miss W. Our union with Him is strengthened and confirmed. Both Sacraments are necessary to salvation, for both unite us to Him; and St. Peter says, 'Neither is there salvation in any other,'—?

'For,' continued Rose, 'there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' (Acts, iv. 12.)

Miss W. We must, then, be very careful to bring our little ones to Christ in the Sacrament of Baptism, that they may be united to Him, and new-born unto righteousness. Then must follow the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and those of you who are confirmed should be careful, with humility and constancy, to seek for renewed strength, and life, and

union, in the way appointed by Christ Himself—even by eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

'Please, Ma'am, may I get you the book?' asked Emily, on Miss Walton's closing her Bible.

'Yes, it's on the shelf,' returned Miss Walton. 'Oh, no! I have it here,' she continued; 'so sit down, Emily, and I will begin.'

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

KATHARINE slept, but not for long. Before six o'clock the sound of her father's voice in the next room aroused her, and she was worried to think that he would find no fire made, and nothing prepared for him to take with him for his breakfast. The quarry where he and his boys worked was not very far off, but they always took their breakfast with them—bread, and cold tea in cans, which sometimes they warmed up, and sometimes drank cold as it was. They generally, however, returned for dinner, which was consequently obliged to be ready at exact time, to enable them to be back by one. There was only an hour allowed for dinner, not two, as is the case in Yorkshire, and other parts of the north of England, so that there was no time to waste.

Katharine had not undressed the night before, and in a very few moments after jumping from her bed she was down-stairs. There, to her surprise, she found the fire made, and the kettle on, and Richard cutting the bread. The cans, too, stood all ready washed for the supply of tea.

'Oh, Dick! have you done this for me?' she exclaimed. 'How kind of you!'

'Nay, I've had no hand in it,' he replied; 'I only *just now* came down, and found all ready, so I

thought I might as well cut the bread; Father is down, and has just gone out.'

'Then I suppose Charles did it. Where is he?' said Katharine.

'I don't know. He had gone out of the room when Father and I got up this morning, and I've never seen him,' returned Richard.

Katharine explained that he had come to relieve her at three o'clock, but that he was not in the room when she awoke, and opening the garden door she walked out to look for him, feeling sure she was indebted to him for her work being done. She looked about, but did not see him, and was just going to return to the house, when she remembered a seat at the far end of the garden, under a large yew tree, and thither she bent her steps, thinking he might be there, nor was she mistaken; through the drooping branches, which almost hid the seat, she espied Charles on his knees. She stood for a moment, looking at him, with tears in her eyes, thinking how good he was, and then, not to disturb him, as quietly as she could, turned away. Before, however, she had reached the house, Charles was by her side, with his mother's Prayer-Book in his hand, looking so bright and cheerful, and saying,

'Oh, Katie! why are you up? I thought we should get off without your knowing anything about it to-day, for the children were all asleep when I left.'

'Father's voice awoke me,' she replied; 'but you are a good boy, Charlie, to do all my work for me. I was so frightened when I woke, and thought it wasn't done, and then I found everything ready!'

Charles's honest face looked still brighter as she said this, while he replied,

'Kizzy fell asleep, so I crept down and did it for you. I thought you wouldn't wake in time. And, I say, Katie, wouldn't you like Miriam to stay at home to-day, and nurse the baby for you?'

'Yes,' she replied, 'but I dar'n't ask Father.'

'Come, Charles, we ought to be at work by this time,' called Fenning; 'and where is that Katharine?'

'I am here, Father,' she answered, and ran forward.

'Take care of Kezia, whatever you do,' he said; 'and don't let her take cold, and mind what the doctor said to you. Do you hear me?'

'Yes, Father, I'll do my best,' she replied.

'And be sure dinner's ready in time,' he added, as he left the door.

The children were still all asleep, except James, who slept in his father's room, and Katharine heard him making noise enough to awake a whole household; she did not, however, heed it, but sitting down as the door closed upon her father and brothers, she put her arms on the table, laid her head upon them, and, with a deep sigh, exclaimed to herself,

'How shall I get through this day? and Father has gone without a word being said about Miriam's staying to help me! Oh, Mother! Mother!'

The door opening again, however, made her start and look up: there stood Charles.

'Father says you needn't send Miriam to school to-day,' he exclaimed in haste; 'so keep up your spirits, Katie;' and before she had time to answer, he was gone again.

Surely Katharine need not have desponded, with such a kind brother to care for her; and so, it seems, she felt; for she immediately roused herself, and began to prepare the children's breakfast, and then, one by one, to get them up. When once the noisy James had fairly got off to school, she found Miriam a great help. Helen had made arrangements, since her mother's death, to live with the dress-maker to whom she was apprenticed. Kezia was not willing to stay in bed up-stairs, and so Katharine made up a bed again on chairs, as she had done the day before,

carefully putting it out of draughts. The poor child seemed very poorly again; her cough was hard and dry, and she complained much of thirst. Katharine made her some toast-and-water, and kept tea constantly ready for her; but she did not like tea, nor care much for the toast-and-water. She lay more quietly than the day before, and Katharine thought her more ill, and felt really unhappy about her. She did her best, however, and carefully gave her medicine at the proper hour; she used every means she could for her recovery, and prayed God to make her well.

Willie gave her most trouble that morning, for he was very fretful. The truth was, he was sickening with the measles too, though Katharine did not think at the time what was the matter.

At length, however, he fell asleep on a little stool, with his head resting against Kezia's bed, and Katharine sat down to feed the baby, who was just awaking, while Miriam set the dinner things. As she took up the little creature, and pressed it to her bosom, (for it seemed to her to be more a part of her mother than any of the other children,) she suddenly remembered her mother's charge—that baby should be baptized as soon as possible, and she began to think how it could be accomplished, and whom she should get for godparents. This was her great difficulty. She would stand for one, she thought, and then—could Helen stand for the other? No, that wouldn't do; Helen was so thoughtless. Then for a godfather, what was she to do? If only Charles had been confirmed, he would have stood, but he wasn't, so it was no use thinking of him. She would talk to Charles, she thought, about it; perhaps he knew some one. Then she remembered all her mother had said to her about showing honour to her father, and she wondered whether it was not neglecting him to say nothing about the Baptism to him—

whether she ought not to consult him as well as Charles. Her conscience seemed to say she ought, and yet she could not face the idea. She was afraid of speaking. Perhaps, she thought, he might make some objection, and then her mother's wish would not be carried out. She got quite puzzled as she thought it over, but though many things went against the idea of speaking to him, her conscience would not let her make up her mind to say nothing. It could not be showing him honour, she thought, to say nothing.

With such thoughts as these, the time went by until dinner hour arrived, and with it the return of her father and brothers.

Great care as Katharine had taken of the sick child, her father's first words were fault finding.

'Why have you brought her down stairs? she would have been much better up.'

'She wouldn't stay up,' answered Katharine, shortly, but happily checked herself before she had said more; yet inwardly she chafed, and thought,

'It is no use; I can't speak to *you* about the baby's Baptism. It isn't my fault, I am sure.'

In the afternoon she was cheered by a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Benson (the clergyman and his wife.) They had heard from James that Kezia had got the measles, and came at once with a supply of pearl-barley to make some drink, and black-currant preserve. Most acceptable they proved to be. Mrs. Benson said she thought Willie was sickening too, and much she feared for the baby.

'And she is not baptized yet, Katharine,' said Mr. Benson. 'I think you ought to bring her to church on Sunday, if possible.'

Katharine had soon told her troubles, and was much relieved by Mrs. Benson's saying that she would stand godmother for the motherless baby, *if Katharine* could get no other; and Mr. Benson

thought he could find a godfather. 'But you ought to speak to your father about it, Katharine,' he said; 'what does he wish? Does not he know anybody?'

Poor Katharine! She did not like to say she was afraid of speaking, that would be blaming her father; and her mother had taught her not to complain of her father's temper to others, so she only answered,

'I don't know, Sir.'

'Then you'd better ask him,' said Mr. Benson, 'and let me know,' he continued, 'whether you fix next Sunday or not, and whether you can find a godfather.'

Katharine durst not say she would speak to her father, but Mr. Benson did not observe it, as she replied,

'I'll let you know in time, Sir, and thank you.'

The following Sunday arrived, and Katharine had never spoken to her father. She had talked the matter over with Charles, and he had said he was sure a young man who worked in the quarry along with them would stand godfather.

'But you must ask Father about it,' he said.

'Oh, Charles! I dar'n't,' she answered.

'Well, I'm sure Mother would say you ought,' returned Charles. 'You know she never did anything of that kind without telling him, though he was often so cross with her.'

'I know that. I know he ought to be told, but I can't, I dar'n't,' said Katharine.

'Well, I cannot do it for you,' said Charles. 'Father would never listen to me; he would say it was no business of mine.'

'I know you can't,' said Katharine, sadly, and so the subject dropped. Sunday, I say, had arrived, and nothing was fixed. Kezia was better, and little Willie too, who had taken the measles, yet only

slightly. Baby showed no signs of it. Helen was at home that day, and had offered to take charge of the children, and let Katharine go to church in the morning. Fenning said he wasn't going, (he seldom did in the morning,) so Katharine thought she might venture to go. She had wished all the week that she might be able, for the Holy Communion was to be administered, and Katharine had thought about it, and tried to prepare for it, in the hopes of being able to go. It was the first time since her mother's death, and she remembered her mother's words, how it had been the means of helping her to be meek and gentle to her husband; and Katharine thought she would go too, and pray God to help her.

Miriam, James, and Charles, had gone off early to school; Richard would not go, neither would he go to church, so that Katharine had to walk by herself, for neither of the little ones was well enough to go. As she walked along, she had time and quiet to think over what she was about to do, and to remember how often she had failed in her conduct to both her father and the children since her mother's death, but she thought she would try and do better; she would follow her mother's example. Her mother's Bible was in her hand, and as she listlessly turned over its pages, with sorrowful thoughts, it opened at St. Matt. xi. and her eyes caught a verse marked by her mother's hand

'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' she read, 'and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.' 'I am meek and lowly in heart,' had a double pencil mark under it.

She closed the book again, and her tears began to fall. She was now near the church, but hearing footsteps behind her, she looked round, and Charles was running after her.

'I've told Mr. Benson that baby is not coming to-day, and he said he was very sorry,' said Charles. 'Oh, Katharine! I wish you had asked Father; don't you remember what Mother said?'

'I know,' she said, scarcely able to speak. 'Oh! I'm very sorry; what must I do?'

'Oh, don't cry! I didn't mean to make you cry,' he said, kindly.

'You didn't make me cry,' she said; 'but look here,' and she showed Charles the marked passage.

After this they walked on in silence, till, just as they reached the quiet village church, Charles said,

'Katie, you are going to Christ, now, in the Holy Communion, ar'n't you?'

'Yes, I intended to go, but I don't know whether I ought. It's very wrong not to speak to Father, I know; and I have answered him wrong so often.'

'Oh! I'm sure you ought to go,' said Charles; and, Katie, I was going to say,' he added, hurriedly, 'think of baby's Baptism *then*, perhaps God will give you courage to speak to Father. You know what Mother said—how it helped her.'

Late that evening, the children were all safely in bed. Richard had fallen asleep on his chair, Fenning sat looking into the fire, and Charles and Katharine were reading together out of their mother's Bible, when Katharine raised her head, and though in a trembling voice, said,

'Father, may we have baby baptized on Wednesday?'

He did not take any notice of her question at first, but her courage did not fail her, and she repeated it.

'Why do you ask me?' was his answer; 'it's nothing to me.'

'Because, Father, I did not like to do it without your leave; but Mother said we oughtn't to put it off.'

It was the first time she had ever mentioned her mother to her father: he turned his head away at the name, but did not answer. Again Katharine said,

‘Charles thinks, if you don’t mind, that John Winchfield would stand godfather; may we ask him?’

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘you may ask him;’ but both Charles and Katharine thought that his voice was tremulous. He was not angry, however, and Katharine felt emboldened.

‘What must we call her?’ she asked; and, receiving no answer, said, ‘May we call her Martha, after dear mother?’ Again he answered, with his face turned away,

‘Yes; but she’ll never be like her.’

Katharine felt inclined to get up and put her arm round her father’s neck, his voice was so gentle, but fear kept her back. Presently, however, he said,

‘Who’ll stand for godmother?’

‘I thought I would stand for one,’ said Katharine, ‘and Mrs. Benson said she would be the other, if we couldn’t find anybody else.’

‘You seem to have arranged all without consulting me, at all events,’ said her father, in more of his surly tone.

‘Oh, no! Father; I didn’t mean to arrange it; I only thought about it. Is there anybody you’d like to have instead?’

‘No; do as you like. I tell you it’s nothing to me,’ he replied, and he rose up and left the house.

‘Oh! I’m so glad you have spoken,’ said Charles.

‘I never should but for you,’ she answered. ‘I mean you reminded me where to seek for courage. Oh, Charles! I couldn’t live without you.’

‘*I must stop reading now,*’ said Miss Walton,

'You have seen that Katharine did not go to the appointed means of grace in vain ; but that, in the Holy Communion, she received that strength of which she stood so much in need, and her example may be a good lesson to us all.'

LESSON LXV.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE OUTWARD SIGN OF BAPTISM.

MR. AND MISS WALTON were sitting one evening in their drawing-room, reading, when the servant knocked at the door, saying,

‘Please, Ma’am, Emily Freeward has brought home the needlework her mother had to do.’

‘She hasn’t gone again, I hope,’ said Mr. Walton, before his sister had time to answer.

‘No, Sir; she said her mother told her to ask if Miss Walton had any more work for her,’ replied the maid.

‘Tell her I want to speak to her then,’ returned Mr. Walton; ‘and send her up here.’

The servant went as she was told, and Mr. Walton said to his sister,

‘I want to speak to her about this Confirmation at Ilsham; if she is able to go, I would write to the Bishop, and ask him if I may bring her there. I don’t think she ought to wait until he comes here again.’

‘Will you see her here, then, or in your study?’ she asked.

‘Oh! here. I shall not say much to her now.’

Hardly had Mr. Walton said this, when Emily knocked at the door, and entered on his saying, ‘Come in.’ She looked pleased, and the colour rose to her cheeks, as she said,

‘Please, Sir, Ellen said you wanted me.’

‘So I do,’ returned Mr. Walton; ‘come nearer to me.’

She obeyed, while the colour deepened on her cheeks.

‘Emily,’ he said, ‘you remember when I allowed you to receive the Holy Communion in your illness, you said that, if you got better, you would wish to be confirmed?’

‘Yes, Sir,’ she answered.

‘And have you still that wish?’ he asked.

‘Oh yes, Sir; but is there going to be a Confirmation here?’ she asked, with some surprise.

‘No,’ returned Mr. Walton, ‘not here, but at Ilsham; and I think you ought to take advantage of this opportunity, and not wait until the Bishop comes here again. Would not you wish to do so?’

Emily hesitated, and then answered, ‘Please, Sir, how could I get there? and should I be all alone?’

‘I should be with you,’ returned Mr. Walton; ‘and I thought perhaps you could walk as far. What do you say, Emily?’

‘Please, Sir, I don’t know,’ she answered; and then, on Mr. Walton’s saying, ‘Do you mean you don’t know whether you can walk, or you don’t know whether you wish to go?’ she replied, ‘I don’t know whether I could walk, and—and—I should like to be confirmed, but I don’t like being alone.’

‘You should not mind that,’ said Mr. Walton, ‘for the sake of the blessing of Confirmation; and I think that, as you have received the Holy Communion, you ought not to put off your Confirmation longer than you can avoid.’

‘Please, Sir, I will do whatever you like,’ she replied.

‘I wish you to go freely, Emily, not to please me,’ said Mr. Walton. ‘After God’s great mercies to

you, I think you will be glad to offer yourself publicly to Him.'

Emily did not answer; and Miss Walton, guessing the cause of her silence, said,

'If I were to go with you, Emily, would you mind then being without your companions?'

'Oh no! Ma'am; if you will go, I shan't mind it at all. I should like to be confirmed then.'

'Well, I dare say I could manage it,' returned Miss Walton. 'I know Mrs. Abbot would be very glad to see me.'

'And, please, Sir, when is it?' asked Emily, her whole manner changed.

'Not for a week or two yet. I don't quite know what day, but I'll find out, and make arrangements for you, if you wish it, and your mother approves of it,' said Mr. Walton.

'Oh yes! Sir, I wish it; and I'm sure Mother won't say anything against it,' said Emily.

'When I have spoken to her,' said Mr. Walton, 'I will talk to you again, and fix some time for you to come to me for examination.'

'Thank you, Sir,' replied Emily.

Before the following Sunday, it was arranged that Emily should go to the Ilsham Confirmation; but Mr. Walton found that the Bishop had not fixed to go there until nearly the last in his round, so that she had to wait longer than he had thought. Once a week, however, she came to him for instruction, and was now anxiously looking forward to the time.

I will tell you more about it another day. Now we had better join Miss Walton's lesson on Sunday afternoon, and listen to the continuation of her story.

'Now that you know what you mean by the word Sacrament, tell me, "How many parts are there in a Sacrament?"' asked Miss Walton.

All. 'Two; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.'

Miss W. If you took away either of these parts, would you any longer have a Sacrament?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No; the union of the two is the form of a Sacrament. Just as if you speak of a father, what does it necessarily imply?

'A child,' said Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; and if you speak of a child, it involves a—?

'Father,' said one or two.

Miss W. The same of husband and wife. Take away one, and the other cannot exist. If there is no child, there is no—?

'Father,' said Anna.

Miss W. And she that hath no husband is not—?

'A wife,' replied several.

Miss W. So take away the signs, and there will be no Sacrament; and take away the thing signified, and though the outward sign be left, it represents, and conveys, and pledges nothing. Therefore we say that a Sacrament has—how many parts?

All. 'Two; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.'

Miss W. And this is the case, not because the outward sign naturally signifies the inward grace, but—why?

Mary. Because Christ appointed it.

Miss W. Christ appointed that the two should go together, and, therefore, the one without the other is no Sacrament. 'What God hath joined together,' Christ says—?

'Let not man put asunder,' continued two or three. (St. Matt. xix. 6.)

Miss W. And, in the last answer, you learnt that the outward part in a Sacrament Christ appointed for more than a sign, also for—what?

All. 'A means of grace, and a pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. Yes; you must remember this, as it makes the difference between the Sacraments and other ceremonies in which we have an outward sign and an inward grace. Can you tell me any ceremony which has these two parts?

'Confirmation,' said Emily, after a moment's thought.

Miss W. Yes, and Ordination. What is the outward sign in both these?

Several. The laying on of the Bishop's hands.

Miss W. Yet we do not call these Sacraments. Why?

Margaret. Because they are not ordained by Christ.

Miss W. Just so; the outward rite is not expressly ordained, therefore it is not in the same degree a pledge of grace. God has not, in His written word, expressly promised, in the laying on of hands, forgiveness of sins, or uniting to Christ. But for what did you tell me, last Sunday, the Sacraments are expressly appointed?

Mary. To unite us to Christ.

'For our salvation,' said others.

Miss W. Quite right; for our salvation; and our salvation is only attained by union with Christ. And by the inward and spiritual grace in both Sacraments we are—?

'United to Christ,' said several.

Miss W. The Catechism, in the first three answers, has spoken of the two Sacraments together. Now we come to one alone. Which?

Alice. Baptism.

Miss W. And 'what is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism'?

Ruth. 'Water; wherein the person is baptized In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Three things you must notice in* this answer, for three things are necessary to make the sign complete. First, what is to be used?

All. Water.

Miss W. Secondly, what use is to be made of the water?

Emily. The person is to be baptized in it.

Miss W. What did I tell you to 'baptize' meant?

Rose. To dip, or wash.

Miss W. Then the use to be made of it is for—?

Several. Washing the person.

Miss W. And, thirdly, what form of words must be used while the person is dipped in the water, or the water is poured upon him?

All. 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. And this is—what part of the Sacrament of Baptism?

Several. The outward and visible sign, or form.

Miss W. And by Whom ordained?

All. Christ Himself.

Miss W. Yes, the matter, the ceremony, and the form, were all ordained by Christ. We have seen already how He ordained the matter—water.* But can you tell me how He appointed it as well as by word?

'By example,' said Sarah, doubtfully.

Miss W. Quite right. How?

Sarah. By being Himself baptized in water.

Miss W. Yes. What does our Baptismal Service teach us was the effect of His Baptism in water? Look at the first prayer.

Jane. 'Almighty and everlasting God, Who . . . by the Baptism of Thy well-beloved Son Jesus

* See Lessons xlii. and xliii. St. John, iii. 5. St. Matt. xviii. 19

Christ, in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin.'

Miss W. What, then, was the effect of His Baptism?

Anna. 'To sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin.'

Miss W. Had *He* any sins to wash away?

All. No, Ma'am; He was quite good.

Miss W. Then did He need the washing of Baptism?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No; but in that His sinless Body was washed in water, He has sanctified it, appointed it, set it apart—for what?

Rose. The mystical washing away of our sins.

Miss W. He has appointed it to be the means of doing that which it is not its nature to do, to be the outward and visible sign of—?

Mary. 'The inward and spiritual grace given unto us' in Baptism.

Miss W. The ceremony, too, He appointed by His example; for where was He baptized?

Harriet. In the river Jordan.

Miss W. And when did the Holy Spirit descend upon Him? Look at St. Matt. iii. 16.

Bessie. 'Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.'

Miss W. It was as He came out of the water; He had submitted Himself to go into the water to be dipped, or have the water poured upon Him. And He bade His disciples keep this ceremony when He told them not only to preach, but—?

Several. To baptize.

Miss W. And did He also appoint the form of words?

Several. Yes. 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

Miss W. Thus we see that the outward and visible sign, or form, in Baptism, ordained by Christ Himself, is—?

All. 'Water; wherein the person is baptized In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. And, as I said before, we seem to see *why* our Blessed Lord chose water as a sign—for, what does water do for the body?

Alice. Cleanses it.

Miss W. Therefore it is fit to signify—what?

'The cleansing of our souls,' said some.

'The washing away of sin,' said others.

Miss W. It had before been spoken of figuratively. Look at the Prophet Zech. xiii. 1.

Ruth. 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.'

Miss W. Can you not remember another text?

'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you,' repeated Agnes, 'and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.' (Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.)

Miss W. Thus water was spoken of as figuring the cleansing of our souls from—what?

Anna. Sin.

Miss W. A fountain was to be opened to wash away sin and uncleanness. But when we thus speak of water, do we really mean that it does in itself wash away sin?

Several. No; only because it is appointed by God.

Miss W. Yes, that is true; but that is not what I mean. What is it that can alone wash away sin?

All. The blood of Christ.

Miss W. We are told there is no remission without—?

Rose. ‘Shedding of blood.’ (See Heb. ix. 22.)

Miss W. Therefore, what did the Jews do for the pardon of sin?

Ruth. Offered up sacrifices of bulls and goats.

Miss W. Yes. But when they had done this, was it the animal’s blood which cleansed from sin?

Several. No, the blood of Christ.

Miss W. Just so. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin; they did but typify what?

‘The blood of Christ,’ answered most of the girls.

Miss W. Then, when the Jews shed the blood of animals for the pardon of sin, Whose blood really cleansed?

All. The blood of Christ.

Miss W. So it is not possible that water should wash away sin; it does but—?

‘Typify the blood of Christ,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Yes, that is what I wanted you to tell me before—that it is not the water in Baptism which cleanses our souls from sin, but—?

All. The blood of Jesus Christ.

Miss W. The water, then, typifies—what?

Several. The blood of Christ.

Miss W. Yes, and is a sign that we are washed in His blood, and a means of our being so washed, and a pledge to assure us thereof, according to His own appointment. We must learn, then, in the waters of Baptism, to see—?

‘The blood of Christ,’ said Mary.

Miss W. Right; which alone can wash away sin. Listen to these beautiful lines speaking of the water
of Baptism :—

'What sparkles in that lucid flood
Is water, by gross mortals ey'd :
But seen by Faith, 'tis blood
Out of a dear Friend's side.'*

Can you give me any texts which tell us that the blood of Christ cleanses us from sin?

All. 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' (1 St. John, i. 7.)

Mary. 'In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.' (Eph. i. 7.)

Miss W. Look also at Rev. i. 5.

Bessie. 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.' (See also 1 Cor. vi. 11; 1 St. Peter, i. 19.)

Miss W. And when are we first washed in His blood?

Agnes. When we are washed in the water of Baptism.

Miss W. Therefore we do not simply pray, in the Baptismal Service, 'Sanctify this water to the washing away of sin,' but what do we pray?

'To the *mystical* washing away of sin,' said one or two.

Miss W. Yes, because it is not the water itself that cleanses, but—?

All. The blood of Jesus Christ.

Miss W. What do you mean by 'mystical'?

'Something we cannot understand,' said several.

Miss W. Rather it means something secret, hidden. We see water poured upon the child which would but wash the flesh; but there is a hidden, secret, mystical washing, of which this is but a sign. What is that washing?

Agnes. The washing away of sin.

Miss W. And this is hidden, mystical, secret.

The outward sign in the Sacraments is typical in so many ways. The water typifies—?

‘The blood of Christ,’ said several.

Miss W. And the outward washing of the body typifies—?

‘The inward washing of the soul,’ they quickly replied.

Miss W. And what does water do for the body?

Alice. Cleanses it.

Miss W. And what does the blood of Christ do for the soul?

All. Cleanses it.

Miss W. From what?

All. Sin, guilt.

Miss W. And thus the cleansing of the body typifies—what?

Several. The cleansing of the soul.

Miss W. Thus we see that the washing of Baptism is indeed a mystical washing. And this we should ever remember as we stand around the font. We should think of Christ shedding His precious blood, and applying it to each little infant, who, according to His appointment, is washed in the waters of Baptism. I say the blood of Christ was paid as the price of our pardon. Do you remember whether it is ever thus spoken of in the Bible? (The girls did not remember, and Miss Walton said,) Look at Acts, xx. 28.

Ruth. ‘Take heed . . . to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.’

Miss W. To purchase is to buy; and that with which He bought us was—?

Anna. His blood.

Miss W. Therefore we are said to be ‘bought with a price.’ See 1 Cor. vi. 20. Look also at St. Matt. xx. 28.

Jane. ‘The Son of Man came not to be ministered

unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.'

Miss W. What do you mean by a 'ransom'?

Rose. Money paid to be set free.

Miss W. Yes; you speak of ransoming a slave, or a captive. Now what does Christ say He gave for a ransom?

All. His life.

Miss W. And when His life was taken away, His blood was shed; and thus we may say the price He paid to set us free was—?

Several. His blood.

Miss W. Now you can remember more texts which speak of His giving Himself for our redemption, or as a ransom, a price paid?

Mary. 'Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself a ransom for all.' (1 Tim. ii. 6.)

Emily. 'Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot.' (1 St. Peter, i. 18, 19. See also 2 St. Peter, ii. 1.)

Miss W. You may look also at the new song sung in heaven. (Rev. v. 9.)

Sarah. 'Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood.'

Miss W. Thus we see that Christ's blood was paid as the price of our pardon. Nothing else was of sufficient value to rescue us. Surely, then, we should always keep this in mind, as we stand around the font, and see the pure water. We should remember the sinless Blood shed for us, in which the little infant is about to be washed, and thus look through the outward washing of water, to this far greater, and more precious cleansing of the soul from sin in the blood of Jesus Christ.

I will not ask you any more questions to-day,

(said Miss Walton,) for I think you would like to hear more of the story, and I have not much time to spare to-day.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

'JOHN WINCHFIELD says he will stand godfather to baby, on Wednesday,' said Charles to his sister, the following evening; 'and what do you think?' he continued: 'Father heard him promise, and turned round, and asked him if he'd come in to supper afterwards.'

'Oh, I'm so glad!' returned Katharine; 'I thought it would only be neighbourly to ask him, and yet I didn't know what Father would say. Will he come?'

'Yes, he'll come. I'm glad you'll see him, for I know you'll like him,' replied her brother.

'I know him by sight,' said Katharine; 'I have often noticed him with the school children in church.'

'Yes, he's been a teacher now for a good bit,' returned Charles; 'I wish our James was taught by him.'

'Now, Charles, will you go this evening, like a good boy, and tell Mr. Benson,' asked Katharine.

'Oh, I want to do my garden,' he replied; 'send Dick.'

'I'm afraid he won't go, but I'll ask him,' said Katharine.

'Dick,' she said, as he entered the room a few minutes afterwards, 'will you go a message for me to Mr. Benson's?'

'No, that I won't,' he replied; 'I'll take care to keep out of his sight, or I shall get a lecture for not being at school on Sunday, and I don't intend to be kept to school now, I can tell him.'

'Oh, Dick!' said Katharine, sadly, 'what would

Mother say? You know she always wished you to go to school.'

'But it's such a bore,' he replied, in a different tone.

'You wouldn't think it so if you'd only take pains and get into the first class, I'm sure. Charles doesn't think it a bore,' returned his sister.

'Charles is a milksop,' he exclaimed.

'Take that for your impudence,' said Charles, striking his brother a blow which made him stagger.

Richard, though younger than Charles, was not a boy to take such a thing as this coolly, and the blow was returned, and the two brothers joined in fight.

'For shame, for shame, boys,' cried Katharine, throwing herself in between them.

'Get out of the way, will you?' said Dick, not scrupling to strike her. But her words had for an instant curbed Charles. Now, however, that he saw his sister struck, his anger rekindled, and he again raised his hand to his brother, and poor Katharine could not separate them.

'Charles, Charles,' at length she cried with tears, 'for Mother's sake give over.'

Charles checked himself, though he had just mastered his brother. He now let go his hold, and, though Dick turned round and struck him again, he did not return the blow.

'There, now, give over, Dick,' said Katharine; 'I'll call Father, if you don't.'

This threat had some effect, and Dick stopped, and the two brothers stood regarding each other—Dick with no kindly feelings—Charles now more angry with himself than with Dick.

'I'll go to Mr. Benson's for you,' said Charles, speaking to his sister, but in a most unnatural voice; and Richard at the same moment took up his cap and ran out.

'Thank you,' said Katharine. 'Then you know

what to say—that we will bring baby to-morrow, and that John Winchfield will be godfather, but we can't find another godmother, so if Mrs. Benson will do us the favour of standing, we shall be much obliged.' Charles stood with his back to his sister as she spoke, and now hurried out of the house. His steps, too, were hurried as he went along, and yet he had plenty of time, and his face became more and more flushed. But it was not anger that now flushed his face—it was shame, and the thought of his mother. If he had been a girl, he would have sat down and cried; and I am not sure that, boy as he was, it would not have been the best thing that he could do, for it is no disgrace for even a boy of fourteen to cry over his faults. The Apostle Peter wept bitterly for his sin, and now Charles might have done the same without being unmanly. I am not at all sure that tears did not come, but he struggled against them, and walked on. He had to pass the Church, and he had forgotten that there was daily service, but now he saw the people going in, and he turned in too. It was the very thing he wanted; some quiet place where he could kneel down and ask God to forgive his anger, and strengthen him to do better. For he did wish to do better very earnestly, and he had tried more than ever since his mother's death, and he thought that he had got the better of his temper, but now he felt that it was strong as ever. At least so *he* thought, poor boy, in his self-condemnation. I don't think Katharine would have said so.

He knelt down in the dark, just inside the Church door, and there, with no eye upon him but the eye of God, he could confess that he had erred and strayed from God's ways like a lost sheep, and hear the gracious message of pardon to the penitent.

When service was over, he waited for Mr. Benson, and delivered his message.

'*Tell her I'm very glad to hear it,*' said the good

clergyman, while Mrs. Benson said that she hoped Katharine would come to their house, and bring as many of the children as she liked, and get some tea before church.

Charles thanked them for their kindness, and started on his way home again. He went along with a much lighter heart than on his way thither, and was pleased to carry the invitation to his sister.

'You can take Kizzy with you,' he said, 'and I'll bring Willie with me. Miriam and James, I suppose, can take care of themselves.'

Katharine feared she could not manage it, but was pleased.

That night, just before Charles knelt down to say his prayers, he turned abruptly to his brother, saying, 'Dick, I'm sorry I struck you to-day.'

'Nonsense,' cried Dick, in surprise; 'I'd forgotten all about it, only I feel rather sore,' he added. 'I say, Charles, but you can make a fellow feel. You were determined I should think you no milksop again.'

'Don't talk in this way about it,' said Charles; 'it was all wrong. You'd no right to call me names, but I was worse to hit you for it. But Dick, I say, never strike Katharine. I cannot stand it. She does everything for us now, as poor Mother did.'

'Well, I won't; it was your fault I did to-day,' he replied.

'I know it was,' said Charles, in a humble tone.

'Stuff! it wasn't,' said Dick; 'it was my own. Of course I needn't have hit her unless I liked.'

A few moments afterwards, Charles had lain down by the side of his brother to sleep, and a peaceful feeling came over him, for he fancied his mother was looking upon him well pleased.

By Charles's contrivance, and willingness to do all he could to help his sister, she was able, with baby in her arms, and *Kezia* running at her side, to start

for the Rectory in good time. Richard, too, had followed her out of the house, saying,

‘I’ll be sure and have supper ready, so don’t fear; Jack Winchfield shall see what a good cook I am.’

‘Very well,’ replied his sister; ‘but I don’t think there’s much cooking; the bacon will do after I come back.’

It was an hour of peace and hope to Katharine, as she stood by the font, with her little treasure in her arms. To her right Kezia stood looking very eager; and beyond her, Charles, with Willie in his arms, fast asleep. Mrs. Benson stood at her left, and John Winchfield beyond her; and Katharine noticed James and Miriam also standing around the font, for Mrs. Benson had told them they might come. Oh! how much she wished her father, and Richard, and Helen, had also been of the number, but she looked for them in vain.

But notwithstanding this, she was very happy, for she thought of her mother, and knew she was fulfilling one of her last wishes. And Katharine knew, too, of the blessing awaiting the little treasure she held in her arms; and just now she thought much of it, for Mr. Benson had spoken to her about it awhile before.

The babe lay sleeping in her arms, the very picture of innocence, ready to receive a blessing.

The service began, and Katharine heard that even that little one was born in sin, and could not enter into the kingdom of Heaven unless she was regenerated, and born anew, of water and of the Holy Ghost. And earnestly she prayed that God would grant to this babe that thing which, by nature, she could not have, that she might be washed from her sins, and sanctified with the Holy Ghost, and be delivered from wrath, and grow in grace, unto her *life’s end*.

She tried to let her thoughts go with all the

prayers then offered up, and to listen to the words of exhortation to the godparents; and her answers for the little one were low, though firm; yet it was not without trembling that she laid the babe in Mr. Benson's arms, and thought how soon she might break her baptismal vows. Then, with the outward sign of water, came the words, 'Martha, I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' And Katharine thought of the Blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin, and believed that, though it was only water that was poured on the infant's body, her soul was then washed in that precious Blood; and that, from that hour, little Martha was 'A member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.' Earnestly Katharine prayed that her little sister might indeed fight manfully, under the banner of Christ, against sin, the world, and the devil. Believing this, the words of the Lord's Prayer were full of meaning; and the thanksgiving which followed was but the natural expression of her heart, for she *was* thankful for the blessings poured down upon the babe—thankful that she was now in a state of salvation; and, as Katharine walked away from the font, she thought that she would try very earnestly to teach that little one to walk worthy of her high calling, that she might continue in the same to her life's end.

The evening passed away pleasantly. John Winchfield talked a great deal to Katharine, and nursed his little godchild, and said he hoped, as she grew up, he might teach her sometimes; and Fenning was much more good-tempered than usual; and Richard had kept his word, and carefully prepared the supper, so that nothing had to be done but to fry the bacon after they came in, and this Richard insisted upon doing.

'You'll grease your grand new dress if you don't

let me,' he said to his sister; and, to please him, she yielded. Charles was not disappointed in Katharine's liking for John Winchfield.

'Yes, Charles, I like him very much,' she said, as her brother lingered down-stairs to talk to his e after everybody else had gone to bed. 'Oh, Charles! this has been the happiest evening we've had since poor Mother died; and somehow, I've felt all the time as if she was near us.'

'I thought so in church,' said Charles. 'And oh, Katharine! how pleasant it was that such prayers should be said for *our* little Martha, and that God should really take her for His own child. Do you know Mr. Benson has often talked to us about Baptism, and the blessings of it, but I never seemed really to feel it like till this evening. Oh! I hope she will always keep good.'

'We must help her all we can,' said Katharine; 'and we must not set her a bad example.' Charles looked very serious, and said,

'Then I mustn't do as I did the other day. Oh, Katie! I was so sorry about that.'

'I know you were, Charlie, and I hope you won't do it again,' replied Katharine.

'I hope not,' he replied. 'If I could only always remember Mother.'

'But, Charles, don't you think, if we could remember our own Baptisms more, it would help us? The same has been done for us as for baby, and so *we* ought to fight manfully against sin, the world, and the devil, as well as she.'

'So we ought,' returned Charles, thoughtfully. 'Dear Baby! how pretty she looks,' he added, as he glanced at her in the cradle, which had not yet been carried up-stairs.

Directly afterwards, he was helping Katharine to remove it to her room, without awaking baby, and the brother and sister said 'good night.'

LESSON LXVI.

THE SACRAMENTS.

BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

'TELL me again, "What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism?"' said Miss Walton, to her assembled class.

Harriet. 'Water; wherein the person is baptized In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

'Harriet, you did not repeat that well,' said Miss Walton, 'for you did not mind the stop after "water." What sort of a stop is it?'

'A semicolon,' said several.

Miss W. Very well. Then repeat it again, and mind the semicolon, Harriet. (She did so, and then Miss Walton continued,)

We saw, last Sunday, that three things are to be noticed in this answer: the matter of Baptism, and—what else?

'The ceremony, and the form,' quickly answered Rose, remembering Miss Walton's very words.

Miss W. Quite right. What did we see was the matter in the outward sign of Baptism?

Several. Water.

Miss W. And what is the ceremony?

Margaret. Washing, or sprinkling.

Miss W. Dipping, you should say, or in some cases, pouring the water on the person, which is commonly called sprinkling, and, I fear, is too often really so.

And how did you tell me Christ appointed this by His example?

Sarah. By going Himself into the water to be baptized.

Miss W. Are we accustomed to dip, or to pour water upon a child?

All. To pour the water.

‘I should like to see a baby dipped,’ said little Ruth.

Miss W. I will tell you why dipping is often preferred, when we have seen that pouring the water is equally efficacious. The church teaches us that it is, by appointing either to be used. Look at the Rubric in the Baptismal Service, just before the naming of the child.

The girls turned to the place, and read, ‘If they shall certify that the child may well endure it, he shall dip it in the water discreetly, and warily.’

‘And now look at the next Rubric,’ said Miss Walton.

‘But if they certify that the child is weak, (read Anna,) it shall suffice to pour water upon it.’

‘And this is usually done with the hand,’ said Miss Walton. ‘Thus the Church teaches us that the child is equally blessed, whether he is dipped in the water, or the water is poured in greater, or less quantities, upon him; for She would not let a sick child lose any share of blessing. Besides that, what did you say the water typified?’

Emily. The Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Yes; and the Bible constantly speaks of the sprinkling of the Blood of Christ, not only of being washed or dipped in it. Look at Heb. xii. 22, 24.

Anna. ‘Ye are come . . . to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling.’

Miss W. Again 1 St. Pet. i. 2.

Alice. ‘Elect . . . through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.’

BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF THE HOLY TRINITY. 81

Miss W. And do you remember what Moses did with the blood of the oxen which were sacrificed to God, when reading the book of God's covenant to the children of Israel? Look at Exod. xxiv. 8.

Jane. 'And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you.'

Miss W. Yes, it was not necessary to dip into the blood, but to pour it, or—?

'Sprinkle it upon the people,' answered the girls.

Miss W. So we believe that it is not *needful* to dip into the waters of Baptism, but sufficient to—?

Margaret. Sprinkle or pour it on the person.

Miss W. Among the Jews we find sprinkling with water, as well as blood, appointed for the purification of an unclean person, typifying the waters of Baptism, which are appointed for—what?

'Our cleansing,' said Agnes.

Miss W. You may look at Num. xix. 17, 18.

Ruth. 'For an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there.'

Miss W. What did we see, last Sunday, the prophet Ezekiel says that God will do for His chosen people?

Several. 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.' (Ezek. xxxvi. 25.)

Miss W. God promises that the sprinkling of water upon them shall make them clean. When is this promise fulfilled?

Several. In Baptism.

Miss W. True. Now I will tell you why dipping used to be preferred, and why some still prefer it. What does the next answer in the Catechism tell us is the inward grace of Baptism?

Several. 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.'

Miss W. Yes; and is it not thus also spoken of in the Bible?

'Therefore,' repeated Mary, 'we are buried with Him by Baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' (Rom. vi. 4.)

Miss W. Then Baptism is a dying and a rising again, and this the dipping was thought to typify. What would going under the water represent?

Agnes. Death.

Miss W. And burial. 'We are buried with Christ.' Then what does the coming up out of the water represent?

'Rising again to newness of life,' answered Rose.

'A new birth unto righteousness,' said others.

Miss W. And when was it that the Holy Spirit came upon our Lord?

Emily. As He came out of the water.

Miss W. So, at our new birth, what do we believe is poured down?

All. The Holy Spirit.

Miss W. As dipping, then, better typified the inward grace of Baptism, it was generally preferred in hot countries; especially when adults (I mean grown-up people) were mostly baptized. And it was also generally performed out of doors in a river. Whom do we read of as being baptized by the way-side?

'The Eunuch, by Philip,' said three or four. (See Acts viii. 26-40.)

Miss W. And persons were generally dipped three times; why, do you think?

Agnes. Because they were baptized in the Name of the Three Persons of the Trinity.

Miss W. Quite right; for the same reason many

clergymen pour the water with their hands three times over the child. Now tell me what is the form of words used?

All. 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Appointed by Whom?

All. Christ Himself.

Miss W. Yes; and these words are necessary; there is no Baptism without them. When a child has been privately baptized at home, and is afterwards taken to Church to be admitted into the congregation, if another clergyman performs the ceremony, do you remember what he is first bid to do?

'Oh! I remember,' said Anna, 'to ask some questions. I wondered what they meant when Mr. Spencer asked them about Mrs. Lute's baby.'

Miss W. Turn to them, and you will see. After the first two questions, what is said?

Anna. 'Because some things *essential* to this Sacrament may happen to be omitted through fear or haste, in such times of extremity; therefore, I demand further of you,

With what matter was this child baptized?

With what words was this child baptized?

Miss W. The matter and the words, then, are both essential. What does that mean?

Several. Necessary.

Miss W. Yes; and, therefore, the clergyman asks these questions, lest, in the hurry caused by dangerous sickness, (the only thing which makes private Baptism allowable,) they should have been altered, or said without water's being used, and thus made of no effect. And who pronounces these words over us?

Several. The clergyman.

Miss W. And does he speak and act by his own authority?

Sarah. No, by God's.

Miss W. Yes; and these words show us this. He does not simply say, 'I baptize thee,' or it might be supposed he acted by his own authority, but—what does he say?

All. 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Then this shows that his authority comes from—?

Mary. 'The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Yes, that he is commissioned by God, and acts and speaks not in his own name. Do you remember last treat day, girls, when you were all assembled in Farmer Brooks's field, that Edgar Morris ran up to Miss Tule, and said,

'I say, we are all to go to the Vicarage, at once'?

'Oh, yes!' cried several. 'Miss Tule asked who told him so.'

Miss W. And could he give any authority for his words?

Several. No; all he would say was, 'Nobody told me, but I know we are to go;' and he was quite vexed because Miss Tule wouldn't mind him.

Miss W. She was quite right not to mind him, for she had received orders to stay in the field until we joined you. But how came you to come at last?

Margaret. Oh! Edward brought a straight message from Mr. Walton.

Miss W. Do you remember what he said?

'I mind,' said Rose; 'he said to Miss Tule, "Mr. Walton sent me to tell you to take all the children to the Vicarage in a quarter of an hour."'

Miss W. How came you to remember, Rose?

'Because, Ma'am, I mind, I thought at the time, "Well, Miss Tule can't doubt now, and we must go."'

Miss W. And did Miss Tule hesitate?

Several. Just for a minute, and then she asked Edward how he came to have seen Mr. Walton, and when the message had been given.

Miss W. And could he tell?

Ruth. Yes; he said he'd been helping to cut the cake up, and that Mrs. Abbot had arrived, and Miss Walton was called out of the room; after a bit she and Mr. Walton came in, and Mr. Walton sent him down with the message to Miss Tule.

'And don't you mind,' added Anna, 'that it was then he said, "Mr. Walton told me to tell you children that Mrs. Abbot had brought something for you, which he will give you before you start to walk round the village."'

'Yes,' replied several of the girls; 'and Edgar called out, "I knew that; I told you to go, but you wouldn't mind me."'

'And do you remember,' asked Miss Walton, amused at the girls' recollections, 'what Miss Tule answered?'

'Yes,' returned Margaret; 'she said, "No, you did not; you brought no message, and what you said was wrong, for you said we must go at once."'

Miss W. Now I think you can see the value of speaking on good authority. Which of the two boys did this?

All. Edward.

Miss W. Yes; he did not come in his own name, but in whose?

Several. Mr. Walton's.

Miss W. And so Miss Tule felt no doubt about obeying his message, whereas she was quite right in not obeying Edgar. If she had obeyed him, and come at once, should we have been ready?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No, we shouldn't have had the pretty rosettes ready to pin upon you, and all would have been confusion; instead of which, it did not take us

ten minutes to pin one upon each of you, and set off with the banners flying.

‘I mind we did wonder so much what Mrs. Abbot could have brought,’ said little Ruth.

‘And wer’n’t the boys proud of them?’ said Margaret, laughing.

Miss W. But now, girls, this illustration may help you to see the value of the appointed words which a clergyman uses over a little infant at the font;—how they assure us that he speaks and acts, not by his own authority, but—?

‘By God’s,’ they replied.

Miss W. Look what St. Paul says of this in 1 Cor. i. The Corinthians were divided, some holding by St. Paul, some by Cephas, that is, Peter. Read verse 12.

Harriet. ‘Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.’

Miss W. And how does he put a stop to this, and show that their obedience was not to be given to man? Read the next verse.

Bessie. ‘Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?’

Miss W. Then he goes on to say, he is glad he did not baptize many, lest any should say he baptized in his own name. He showed them that he had not come in his own name, but God’s, for that it was in His Name they were baptized, and their obedience was due to—Whom?

Rose. God, in Whose Name they were baptized.

Miss W. And if any asked a clergyman when he received the authority thus to speak and act, could he (like Edward) tell?

Rose. Yes; just before Christ ascended up into heaven.

Miss W. He can tell all the particulars, how Christ commissioned—whom?

Several. The Apostles.

Miss W. Yes; and the Apostles others, and these again commissioned more, and so on until the clergymen of the present day are commissioned by God, and come, not in their own name, but God's, and say—?

Jane. 'I baptize thee In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Thus we know that they are true messengers. We know that, by the laying on of the Bishop's hands, they have received their commission, and that the bishops of the present day have received their authority, step by step, from the Apostles, who were commissioned by Christ Himself. Just, girls, as when you are all walking to church, if I want you to walk slower, and if I give the command to the last two, by whom I am walking, how does it reach the two in front?

Several. It goes from one to another.

Miss W. Yes, it comes from me first, and it reaches the two front ones by passing through the mouths of each couple. With what promise did Christ give His commission?

Agnes. 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'

Miss W. But now to return to my illustration. When you came up to the Vicarage, after Edward's message, were you not quite sure of finding something for you?

'Yes, Ma'am,' they replied.

Miss W. And if there had been nothing, who would have deceived you?

'Edward,' said some. 'Mr. Walton,' said others.

Miss W. If Mr. Walton sent the message, and yet gave you nothing, *he* would have deceived you; but did you for a moment think he would do so?

'No, Ma'am,' they replied, while Ruth added, 'Only we couldn't tell what he could have for us.'

Miss W. You felt no more doubt than if Mr. Walton had told you himself; so when the commissioned clergyman speaks and acts in God's name, we must look upon it the same as if—what?

Mary. God Himself spoke and acted.

Miss W. And as Mr. Walton could not have sent you such a message unless he had had something for you, so we may be quite sure God has blessings for us, for He cannot deceive us. What does the prophet Balaam say of God's truthfulness?

Anna. 'God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?' (Num. xxiii. 19.)

Miss W. Then when we hear those words, 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' they may fill us with confidence and comfort. We may feel quite sure that God will make good His promises—that He will give to the baptized person (who is faithful on his part) the inward and spiritual grace of Baptism, and take him into His favour. But now let us see what obligation is laid upon us by being baptized in this Holy Name. If a proclamation were issued in the name of the Queen, calling upon all who were able to enlist in her service, and fight for her, whom would every one who obeyed the summons be obliged to acknowledge?

Anna. The Queen.

Miss W. Yes; by taking arms in her name, they acknowledge her. Would any one obey the summons who despised her authority?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Then, by obeying it, what would they show?

Several. That they acknowledged her as Queen.

Miss W. Yes; and even if a person of another nation were to obey the summons, and enlist in her service, (as long as he continued to fight in her name,

under her banner,) he would be obliged to acknowledge her authority, and be subject to her. Then Whom are we bound to acknowledge after Baptism?

'God,' they all replied.

Miss W. Are we only baptized in the Name of One Person of the Godhead?

All. No; 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Then Whom are we bound to acknowledge?

Agnes. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Miss W. Yes, Three Persons, One God. Why must we acknowledge each Person?

Margaret. Because we are baptized in the Name of each.

Miss W. Yes, in the threefold Name. We go forth to fight in the Name of the Holy Trinity, and, therefore, we are bound to acknowledge the Three Persons in the One Godhead. What do you learn in the Creed that you are to believe concerning each Person?

Alice. 'First, I learn to believe in God the Father, Who hath made me, and all the world. Secondly, in God the Son, Who hath redeemed me, and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God.'

Miss W. Then, by being baptized in the Name of the Holy Trinity, we are bound—?

'To acknowledge the Three Persons,' they replied.

Miss W. Yes, and Their different offices. And, further, to whom must all submit themselves who enlist in the Queen's service?

Several. To the Queen.

Miss W. And those to whom she commits authority, her generals and officers. Then to Whom are we bound to submit ourselves?

Sarah. To the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Miss W. In all Things we must submit to Their teaching, whether it comes to us directly, or through the appointed teachers. Who are they?

All. The clergymen.

Miss W. And being baptized in the Name of the Three Persons, we must not only listen to Their commands, but when we hear them, what are we bound to do?

Mary. Obey them.

Miss W. What are the soldiers of the Queen bound to do when she commands?

All. Obey her.

Miss W. So we must be obedient soldiers of that Holy Name by which we are called. And to whom do soldiers give honour?

Rose. To the King or Queen they fight for.

Miss W. And to Whom must we give honour?

All. To the Holy Trinity.

Miss W. Does our Church ever teach us to do this in words? What do we say after each Psalm?

All. 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Thus we are taught to give honour to the Holy Name into which we are baptized. And would that soldier be thought faithful who disliked to obey his sovereign, or fought unwillingly in his cause, or in a cowardly manner?

'Oh, no!' said several.

'A soldier must not be a coward,' said Bessie.

Miss W. A soldier, whose heart is not in the cause of the sovereign under whom he serves, is not good for much. So we are but poor soldiers, unless we fight boldly, willingly, and heartily, for our Lord and Master. Why are we signed with a cross in Baptism?

All. In token that hereafter we shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and *manfully* to fight under His banner against sin, the

world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto our life's end.

Miss W. Called by the Name of God, we must not be ashamed to confess Him—to acknowledge Him; and we must fight manfully under His banner, according as He shall direct our warfare. And, once more, you know soldiers like to fight for a noble king; they are proud to serve a great sovereign. Now what sort of a King are we called upon to serve?

'A great King, Almighty God,' said Ruth.

Miss W. Yes, Him Who is above all other kings, all other lords. What Name, are we told in the Revelations, is written on His vesture and on His thigh?

Mary. 'King of kings, and Lord of lords.' (Rev. xix. 16.)

Miss W. Then He, by Whose Name we are called, is worthy of our service; He is above all other lords, and we should thankfully fight under His banner, and glory in Him, as a soldier glories in his chief. And how can girls like you fight in the service of your King?

'By fighting against His enemies,' said Agnes.

Miss W. And what are we told are His enemies?

Several. The world, the flesh, and the devil.

Miss W. And how can you fight against them?

Emily. By resisting temptation.

Miss W. True. And remember our Great King will not let us fight alone. The weakest child who fights in His army, has the King ever by his side assisting him. A soldier is proud to fight by the side of his sovereign, and we, if we will, may even fight by the side of our King, for—how is He ever present with us?

Jane. By His Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Be, then, all of you faithful to the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into which you

were baptized—faithful by obedience, courage, cheerfulness, and submission; then will you be more than conquerors, through Him Who loved you, and gave Himself for you.

‘Shall I now read more of Katharine?’ asked Miss Walton, as she closed her books.

‘Oh, yes! please, Ma’am,’ returned the girls.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

‘KATIE,’ said Charles, as he came in from church one morning that she had not been able to go, ‘do you know that there is to be a Confirmation here in six weeks? Mr. Benson gave notice of it in church, and spoke to us boys about it in school.’

‘Oh, I’m so glad! then you’ll be confirmed, won’t you, Charles?’

‘Yes,’ he replied. ‘You remember what Mother said about it. I told Mr. Benson I would, as soon as church was over.’

‘Dick is not old enough, I suppose,’ said Katharine.

‘No; fourteen is the age mentioned; but Mr. Benson said he shouldn’t be particular, if he was satisfied with a boy’s conduct.’

‘I’m afraid he wouldn’t be satisfied with Dick,’ she said, ‘even if he wished to be confirmed; and I’m afraid he won’t.’

‘You’ll speak to him, won’t you?’ said Charles.

‘I’m afraid he’ll only laugh at me. Oh! if Mother were alive, she’d know what to do.’

‘You always do very well,’ said Charles to his sister, affectionately. ‘I’m sure you’ll say all that’s right to Dick.’

‘I’m afraid I shan’t,’ she returned; ‘but if I do, he won’t listen to me as he did to Mother, because he *so often sees* me do wrong. He heard me speak to

Father so pettishly last night. If I was only good like Mother!

'I'm sure you are growing like her. You stopped yourself in a minute last night.'

'Not till the evil was done,' she replied. 'Didn't you hear Dick's whisper to Helen?'

'No; what did he say?'

'He said, "Hark at her! And she goes to the Sacrament!" Oh, Charles! I felt so grieved; I know Mother would have said I was disgracing my profession; and that is so dreadful.'

Charles was silent for a moment, and then said,

'Katie, if you talk in that way, you'll make me frightened to be confirmed. Mr. Benson said to-day, all who were confirmed must be very careful to walk worthy of their public profession, and not to bring dishonour on God's Holy Name, to which they would have vowed fresh obedience.'

'No, Charles, you must not be afraid. I did not mean to make you afraid; I was only thinking of myself. You'll be better than I am, I'm sure.'

Katharine was here interrupted by the return of the children from school and church. They had lingered on the road, and so were behind Charles.

'I say, Katie, I hope dinner is ready, I'm as hungry as a hunter!' cried James, and he caught up a fork, and stuck it into the potatoes, to see if they were done.

'They are famous!' he exclaimed. 'Now be quick, girls, and get your things off. Off with you, Kizzy!' giving the little girl a push towards the stairs, as he spoke, which made her begin to cry; and Charles called out angrily to James.

'Never mind, Kizzy,' said Katharine, 'he's only in play; he didn't hurt you. Go with her, Miriam, and wash Willie's hands and face for me.'

'And are we to wait for that?' exclaimed James. 'Look sharp then, will you?'

'If you'll be still, I'll be quick,' said Katharine, good-naturedly, 'but see, you've awoke baby with your noise, so now you'll nurse her.'

The wild boy, after capering two or three times round the cradle, until the baby crowed with pleasure, took her up, and danced her in a way to frighten most people; but Katharine knew him, and was not afraid, and he kept the baby while she tried to be quick with the dinner.

'Where is Dick?' she asked.

'Oh, he'll be here in no time. I left him talking to Joseph Wildboy, not far off,' said James; and while he was speaking, in came Richard.

Fenning had gone away for the day, so now the whole family were assembled except Helen, who generally came to them on Sundays. As she did not appear, however, Katharine thought she was perhaps getting her dinner somewhere else, and that they need not wait for her.

The party were soon gathered round the table, with the elder sister at the head. She looked very young to have the care of so many.

'Be still now, children, and let us say grace,' she said, as she stood up and put her hands together. Her example was followed by all the young ones, even wild James; and Charles stood up too, though, having baby in his arms, could not put his hands together; but Richard sat still, with a scornful smile on his lips. Katharine looked towards him with sorrowful, entreating eyes, though she did not speak a word, but turning to Kezia, said, 'You may say grace,' and shut her eyes. The little girl repeated slowly the accustomed words, 'For what we are going to receive, may the Lord's Holy Name be praised;' and the party sat down to their scanty dinner of potatoes and cabbage, with the Sunday treat of a taste of bacon.

Dick perhaps thought that his scorn would have made Katharine and the rest ashamed of this act of

devotion, but he was quite mistaken; he alone was the one who felt shame as Katharine's eyes met his, although he put on a bold face. She was not ashamed of showing honour to God.

The children were full of things to tell their sympathizing sister. One had said her hymn without a mistake; another had answered a question that none other in the class could answer; and James was full of delight because he was to go into the second class the following Sunday.

'Why, that is John Winchfield's class, isn't it?' asked Katharine.

'Yes,' cried James, 'and he is a nice fellow. I've been working hard to get into his class I don't know how long.'

'I'm very glad you've succeeded,' said his sister, while Dick exclaimed,

'I suppose he'll make you as sanctimonious as himself. He's no more spirit in him than a girl.'

James looked ashamed of his liking for John, but Katharine remarked gently,

'How can you say so, Dick? I should not like him if he had no spirit. Don't you remember how brave he was last winter, when he jumped into the river and saved little Janey Barlow?'

'Anybody would have done that who could swim,' he replied.

'Oh, no! I remember Father said it was dangerous even for a good swimmer in that part of the river.'

James looked pleased to hear this defence of his favourite, and Kezia begged to hear about the child that had fallen into the river, which Charles told her in a very animated way, praising John Winchfield's spirit to both James's and Katharine's heart's content.

Thus the dinner passed happily away, and once more they stood up to return thanks. This time Dick rose also, but it was to turn away from the table before the words were said. He durst not have done

this if his father had been there ; for, strange to say, although Fenning was careless of these things himself, he liked to see his children mind them. He had been accustomed to see it in their mother's lifetime, and he liked to see it still ; so that Katharine had not had any difficulty in keeping up the good habit. Fenning, too, had compelled Richard to go to the Sunday-school ; at least, he always sent him off, though he too often played truant out of sight.

While Miriam was saying grace after dinner, the door opened, and Helen walked in.

'I hope you've a bit of dinner for me,' she said ; 'I took a walk, and that made me late.'

'I'm afraid there's not much,' said Katharine. 'But will you make haste, or I shan't get cleared away in time for church again.'

'I'll clear away,' she said. 'Dick, you're not going, are you?' she asked ; 'you'll stay with me, won't you?'

'No, I'm not going,' he replied, 'and I'm not going to stay here either. I'm going to Hitchen with Joseph.'

'There's no need for any of you to stay,' said Katharine. 'Aunt said I might take baby and leave her there, and she would take care of her. I'll take Willie with me, and lock up the house.'

'You needn't do that, for I shan't go,' said Helen.

Katharine tried to persuade her, and to turn Richard from his purpose, but her efforts were in vain ; and so, leaving Helen to take care of the baby, she set off for church with Willie ; the rest had gone before to school.

Had she known that no sooner was her back turned, than Helen was visited by a young man from the town, and that the baby was left to lie in her cradle while she walked up and down the garden and about with him, she would not have trusted her ;

but she thought her sister stayed quietly within all the time, and was feeling grateful to her for taking the care of the child.

The hour of service was a time of rest and refreshment to poor Katharine, and this day she very earnestly prayed that she might not again bring dishonour on God's Name, and put a stumbling-block in the way of her brothers and sisters. As she had walked to church, she had thought over the Confirmation, and Dick, and felt sure, from what had passed that day, that he was in no fit state to be confirmed, and that, as he was younger than the appointed age, she had better not say anything to him about it. But she wondered what Helen would do, and whether she had heard about it. She thought that, as she now stood in the place of a mother to them all, she ought to mention it to Helen, and yet she feared to do so. She would rather speak to Dick than to Helen, she thought, and her courage almost failed her.

Mr. Benson, however, preached on the subject of the Confirmation, and said much to the young about boldly choosing the right way, not allowing themselves to be turned aside by the laugh of their companions, but to come forward heartily and cheerfully, now that their God and King (to whose service they were already pledged) called them to an open profession of His Name and His service; and he reminded them of God's gracious promise, 'Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven;' and of the awful threat, 'But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.' (St. Matt. x. 32, 33.) And he said those denied Him who were ashamed or unwilling to make an open profession of His service at Confirmation. Afterwards he spoke a few earnest words to those already confirmed, begging them to use their influ-

ence with the young in leading them to make a right choice.

That evening, when the children had gone to bed, (Richard had not returned,) Katharine, Charles, and Helen, sat alone by fire-light.

‘Have you heard of the Confirmation, Helen?’ asked Katharine.

‘No,’ she replied; ‘is there one?’

‘Yes, and Charles has given in his name; won’t you give in yours?’ she asked.

‘No,’ said Helen, ‘I *should* be laughed at by the young women. They often make fun of you for going to Communion, I can tell you,’ said Helen.

Katharine’s cheeks flushed at this remark, though it was too dark to be seen, but she replied,

‘I don’t think that ought to make any difference. If we don’t leave off doing what is right, their laughing at us won’t hurt us.’

‘That’s all very fine for you to say, who are shut up here all day, and never hear a word that’s said; but you’d find it very different if you went among the girls as I do; you wouldn’t like it then, I can tell you.’

‘I’m sure it would be much harder,’ said Katharine; ‘but—but, Helen dear, I don’t think that ought to stop you. Wouldn’t Mother have said so?’

‘I don’t know,’ she replied. ‘Do you say Charles is going?’

‘Yes, I’m going,’ he answered.

‘And do the boys laugh at you?’ asked Katharine.

‘I dare say they will,’ he returned; ‘but you know what Mr. Benson said in his sermon.’

‘Oh! I wish you had heard his sermon, Helen,’ said Katharine. ‘He made all so plain. I think you wouldn’t mind the laugh of your companions if *you had* heard what he said, that to turn away be-

cause of that was being ashamed of God, in whose Name we have been baptized; and if we did this, God would be ashamed of us at the last day, and send us away from Him. Do think about it, and don't make up your mind at once not to go.'

'It's no business of yours, at any rate,' said Helen. 'I didn't come here to be preached to, and by *you*, too, Katharine. You are no better than other people.'

'But she is,' said Charles, with some warmth. Katharine, however, laid her hand on his shoulder, and he checked himself.

'Oh! Helen, don't be vexed,' she said. 'I didn't mean to vex you. I know I often do wrong, and I am very sorry, and I didn't mean to set myself above you by speaking to you; only—only, Mother is not here now to speak, and you said you hadn't heard about it.'

'So you thought *you'd* be mother, did you?' she exclaimed, laughing. 'That's rather good!'

Katharine turned hot and cold as this jeering speech was made, but she conquered herself, and was silent. Her hand was on her mother's Bible, and this helped her. She saw, however, it was no use to say more, and sorrowfully rose to prepare food for the baby. Her conscience, however, was at peace; she had not shrunk back from the call of duty; and though her words had been so unsuccessful, as it seemed, she felt that she had been right to speak, and this brought peace.

'That must do,' said Miss Walton. 'Now who can tell me which characters in this story acknowledge that Name in which they were baptized?'

'Charles,' said several.

Miss W. How?

'By wishing to be confirmed,' said one or two.

'Yes,' said Miss Walton; 'Confirmation was a call

to him to enlist anew in God's service, and he was willing to obey the call.'

'And, please, Ma'am, did not Katharine do the same by saying grace, and speaking to Helen?' asked Margaret.

'Yes,' replied Miss Walton; 'by every act of obedience to the call of duty, she acknowledged and served her God and King. And the little children, by putting their hands together and thanking God for their dinners, were doing—what?'

'Acknowledging God,' said Ruth.

'And which of the party dishonoured the Holy Name by what we are called?'

'Richard, by refusing to say grace,' said one or two.

'Helen, by not going to church, and refusing to be confirmed,' said others.

Miss W. Quite right. Helen feared the laugh of her companions more than she feared God, and so she dishonoured Him. You see, then, girls, how it is, that, by our daily acts, we may either dishonour that holy Name by which we are called, or walk worthy of it. Whatever we do, St. Paul says, in word or deed, we should do it in the Name of the Lord.* If we do this, then we are walking worthy of God, Who hath called us unto His kingdom and glory.†

* Col. iii. 17.

† 1 Thess. ii. 12.

LESSON LXVII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

BY NATURE BORN IN SIN.

'WE have seen what is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism : now tell me what does it signify ?'

Margaret. 'The inward and spiritual grace given unto us.'

Miss W. Why is the grace called 'inward'?

Several. Because we cannot see it.

Miss W. And why 'spiritual'? What does it chiefly belong to?

Sarah. The soul, or spirit.

Miss W. Yes, the immortal spirit—that which cannot die. And by Whom is it imparted?

Agnes. By the Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Yes; it is spiritual, therefore, for what two reasons?

Rose. Because it belongs chiefly to our spirits, and because it is imparted by the Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Quite right. Now tell me 'What is the inward and spiritual grace?'

All. 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.'

Miss W. The grace, then, or special favour made over to us in our Baptism, consists of two parts—what are they?

'Death and birth,' said little Agnes.

Miss W. Very right ; death to what ?

All. Sin.

Miss W. Birth, to what ?

Several. Righteousness.

Miss W. Can we die before we are born ?

‘No,’ said one or two, while Rose added,

‘We must have lived, before we can die.’

Miss W. True. But what sort of a life is our first life, to which we die in Baptism ? We are, by nature, born in—what ?

‘Sin,’ they replied.

Miss W. Then our natural life is one of guilt—we are all born guilty in God’s sight ; therefore, under what do we lie ?

Emily. God’s wrath ; we are ‘children of wrath.’

Miss W. But what takes place in Baptism ? To this life we—?

‘Die,’ said Mary.

Miss W. And, then, what follows this death to sin ?

Anna. ‘A new birth unto righteousness.’

Miss W. Yes ; a new life is given to us ; and we are made—what ?

Several. ‘Children of grace.’

Miss W. And why do we need to die to sin, and to be new-born to righteousness ?

Rose. Because, by nature, we are ‘born in sin, and the children of wrath.’

Miss W. Very good. Now this is the part of the answer upon which I will first question you—what we are by nature, which makes Baptism necessary for us : afterwards, you shall tell me more about the inward grace. By nature we are—?

Jane. ‘Born in sin.’

Miss W. What does the prophet David say of this in Psalm li. ?

Ruth. ‘Behold, I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.’

Miss W. Was Adam made sinful ?

All. No ; very good.

Miss W. Are we told this in the Bible ?

Anna. Yes ; ' God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.' (Gen. i. 31.)

Miss W. ' Everything ;' man, also, was very good. And look at Ecclesiastes, how Solomon says man was made.

Bessie. ' God hath made man upright ; but they have sought out many inventions.' (Eccles. vii. 29.)

Miss W. Man, then, in the beginning, was upright, his affections and passions pure, his will uncorrupt, and he was in the favour of God ; and God spake to him, and he to God, without fear. What are we told that God brought to Adam ?

Several. All the animals, to be named.

Miss W. Yes ; and Who brought Eve to the man ?

All. God. (See Gen. ii. 19-22.)

Miss W. Thus God spoke to man, and man feared not. But did Adam remain ' very good' ?

Harriet. No, he sinned.

' By eating of the forbidden tree,' said Alice.

Miss W. And by this act of disobedience, all mankind became sinners. What was Adam after his disobedience ?

' Sinful—guilty,' they replied.

Miss W. Yes, no longer very good ; his whole nature was corrupted, his will weakened, his passions and affections evil ; he could no longer stand upright ; his will, left to itself, was powerless to follow the voice of his conscience. We see at once the change. The eyes of both were opened, the Bible says, and what did they know ?

Several. That they were naked.

Miss W. And what filled their hearts ?

Rose. Shame.

Miss W. Did they know shame before ?

Margaret. No. 'They were both naked . . . and were not ashamed.' (Gen. ii. 25.)

Miss W. It was sin, then, that made them ashamed; though naked before, they could appear in the presence of God without shame; now they could not, for sin had made them unclean; and shame, a consciousness of their unworthiness, filled their hearts; and what, further, did this shame make them feel?

Agnes. Afraid.

Miss W. Afraid of what?

Emily. Meeting God.

Miss W. Shame, then, and fear, had come upon them, and dread of meeting God. So what did they do?

Ruth. Made themselves aprons of leaves, and hid themselves.

Miss W. How sad was this change! instead of joyfully meeting God, tremblingly shrinking from His sight! But could they escape Him?

Mary. No; He called them.

Miss W. Yes; and they could not resist His call. And now we see, still further, how corrupt they had become. Did they confess their guilt with sorrow?

Sarah. No; they tried to excuse themselves.

Miss W. Whom did Adam blame?

All. Eve.

Miss W. And Eve?

Several. The devil.

Miss W. Thus pride, which would not confess its sin, had entered in, and love to each other was marred. Adam now loved himself better than his wife, whom he had before loved so tenderly. Thus sin had corrupted him, and was he any longer fit for the immediate presence of God?

Anna. No; God drove him out of the garden of Eden.

Miss W. And shut him out from what tree?

Several. The tree of life.

Miss W. And, thus corrupted, unfit for the immediate presence of God, and unworthy of the tree of life, he went forth. And what were his children after this his fall?

Margaret. Corrupted too.

Miss W. He begat a son, we are told, in what image? Gen. v. 3.

Harriet. 'Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image.'

Miss W. In Whose likeness was Adam at first made? Verse 1.

Sarah. 'In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him.'

Miss W. But this likeness was marred—when?

Mary. When he sinned.

Miss W. Therefore, after that, we are not told that Adam begat a son in the likeness of God, but—?

Alice. In his own likeness.

Miss W. Yes, with his fallen nature, and the guilt of sin upon him, prone to evil, weak in will, shut out from God and from the tree of life. And after this, all the sons of Adam were, as the Catechism says—what?

Several. 'Born in sin.'

Miss W. So that, very soon, what are we told God saw when He looked upon the earth?

Margaret. 'That the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.' (Chap. vi. 5.)

Miss W. And so it is until the present day. All the sons of Adam are—?

Several. 'Born in sin, and the children of wrath.'

Miss W. I will read you some verses about the sad change wrought by Adam's sin.

'Foe of mankind! too bold thy race:
Thou runn'st at such a reckless pace,

Thine own dire work thou surely wilt confound :
 'Twas but one little drop of sin
 We saw this morning enter in,
 And lo ! at eventide the world is drown'd.

See here the fruit of wandering eyes,
 Of worldly longings to be wise,
 Of Passion dwelling on forbidden sweets :
 Ye lawless glances, freely rove ;
 Ruin below and wrath above
 Are all that now the wildering fancy meets.*

'Ruin below and wrath above' were the sad consequences of Adam's sin ; for from that hour all were born—?

Several. 'In sin, and the children of wrath.'

Miss W. What does St. Paul say came into the world by one man's sin ?

Emily. 'By one man *sin* entered into the world, and death by sin ; and *so death* passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' (Rom. vi. 12.)

Rose. 'By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.' (Verse 19.)

Miss W. Yes, all are sinners in Adam. Look again how St. Paul describes man in his natural state. Eph. ii. 2.

Jane. 'In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom, also, we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.'

Miss W. 'In times past,' St. Paul says, that is, before they were converted and baptized, when they were living according to their fallen nature. In reading such passages as these, girls, you must remember that they were addressed to those who had grown up, not as Christians, but as—?

* 'Christian Year.' Sexagesima Sunday.

'Heathens,' said several.

Miss W. Yes; they had grown up to manhood, left in their weak sinful state; but are *we* thus left?

Emily. No; we are baptized when we are little babies.

Miss W. Yes; there is the great difference between our condition and those Christians to whom St. Paul wrote, who had grown up to manhood with their evil natures unrenewed, and sin having full power over them. We were baptized as infants, before the evil inclinations of our nature had time, in their full power, to work in us. We are doubly guilty, therefore, if *we* fall into such sin as St. Paul here speaks of. Remembering this, look at chap. iv. 17-19, at the further description of what our unregenerate nature is, and to what it would lead us.

Bessie. 'This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.'

Miss W. In our natural state, then, we are described as having the understanding—what?

'Darkened,' they replied.

Miss W. Yes; and as being—what else?

Rose. 'Alienated from the life of God.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'alienated'? (They did not know, and Miss Walton asked again,) What do you mean by 'an alien'?

'A stranger,' said Sarah.

Miss W. Very good. Then alienated means—
es—?

'Estranged,' said Margaret.

Miss W. Yes, or turned from. The nature in which we are born is estranged from God; for we are born—?

'In sin,' they replied.

Miss W. And thus guilty in God's sight; and, if left as we are born, should grow up in sin; it would grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength. And we are not only born in sin, but born—what does the Catechism say further?

All. Children of wrath.

Miss W. As the natural consequence of our sin. So St. Paul went on to speak to the Ephesians; look again at Chap. ii. 3.

Harriet. 'And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.'

Miss W. And, in another place, St. Paul speaks of us as *enemies*, in our natural state. Look at Rom. v. 10.

Bessie. 'If, when we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.'

Miss W. Yes; we were enemies, lying under His wrath, when He took pity on us. When were we enemies?

Mary. When we were first born in sin.

Miss W. Think, then, how miserable our condition would have been, if God had left us as we were born, if He had left us in our sin, guilty before Him, and under His wrath, if He had left us 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.' And what else does St. Paul say of the heathen?

Anna. 'Strangers from the covenants of promise, *having no hope*, and without God in the world.' (Eph. ii. 12.)

Miss W. Yes, 'having no hope,' because we could have done nothing to renew ourselves. 'But now,—what does St. Paul go on to say of Christians?

Several. 'In Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.'

Miss W. Yes; 'God, who is rich in mercy, for

His great love wherewith He loved us,' has done—what for us ?

Mary. 'Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved ;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' (Eph. ii. 4-6.)

Miss W. Even when we were dead in sin, we were quickened, or made alive with Christ—how ?

Several. By Baptism.

Miss W. Yes ; the inward grace of which is 'A death'—?

'Unto sin,' they all repeated, 'and a new birth unto righteousness.'

Miss W. So that, from being children of wrath, we are hereby made—what ?

All. 'Children of grace.'

Miss W. Or favour—reconciled to God in Jesus Christ. St. Paul's words, then, which you have quoted, describe us, not as we are now, but—?

'As we were before we were baptized,' they replied.

Miss W. Yes, he describes our state by nature, the state in which we were born, and in which, unless God had taken pity on us, we must have remained. But can we now be said to have no hope, and to be without God in the world ? What do you say, in the beginning of your Catechism, you have been made in your Baptism ?

All. 'A member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.'

Miss W. Then what do we hope for now ?

Agnes. The kingdom of Heaven.

Miss W. And, instead of being without God, we are—?

Several. His children.

Miss W. In Whom ?

Several. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Now I want you to think how thankful you ought to be for these blessings—that you were not left in the power and under the guilt of sin, and under God's wrath, to perish everlastingly. What did the Angel say to the Blessed Virgin, that Christ should do for His people?

Several. 'Save His people from their sins.'

Miss W. Yes; and He begins to do this for you, when He permits you, as little infants, to be brought to Baptism, the inward grace of which is—what?

Several. 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.'

Miss W. Yes; but this part of the answer, I will, if all be well, question you about next Sunday. To-day, however, you can see how (if Baptism is a death unto sin) it delivers you from—what?

Rose. The sin in which we were born.

Miss W. Yes, which is called original sin, the sin we inherited from Adam, and in which we were born. But Christ having appointed Baptism to be a 'death unto sin,' He there washes away the guilt of that sin, and so begins His work as a Saviour in you. You cannot now turn to sin without going against Him, for He is ever present with you, to save you from it. If you fall into any such sins, as St. Paul says the Ephesians had been guilty of, your guilt would be much greater—why?

Several. Because we are God's children.

Miss W. Yes; but they thus sinned before they were regenerated, while their evil nature had full power over them. He is not describing the sins of Christians, but the sins of heathens; and, therefore, our guilt is greater if *we* thus sin. The greatest sinner among Christians cannot be said to be without Christ, (except he be reprobate;) and, therefore, if we sin, we are despising Christ, Who is with us, ready to help us, and subdue evil in us. Look at 2 St. Peter, ii. 20.

Jane. 'If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.'

Miss W. And St. Paul warns us against neglecting so great salvation—(salvation, on the being saved from sin.) Look at Heb. ii. 3.

Ruth. 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?'

Miss W. Again, Chap. xii. 25.

Alice. 'If they escape not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven.'

Miss W. We have known our Saviour, and escaped the pollution in which we were born, and He now speaks to us by our consciences, and would lead us gently along the right and narrow way; so that if, notwithstanding all this, we sin, our sins are worse than the sins of heathens; for by our sins, what do we do?

Several. Despise our Saviour.

Miss W. Yes, and the grace of our Baptism. Listen again to some lines from the same little book I read from just now.

'We cannot hope the heathen's doom
To whom God's Son is given,
Whose eyes have seen beyond the tomb,
Who have the key of Heaven.' *

Remember this, girls, that every time you are tempted to sin, Christ, your Saviour, is ready and willing to deliver you, or save you from it; so that, if you fall, your guilt is far greater than the guilt of those who are still aliens from God; and your doom, if you continue in sin, must be greater. Look at St. Luke, xii. 47, 48.

* Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Ruth. 'That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.'

Miss W. And has much been given to us?

Several. Yes, Ma'am.

Miss W. Yes; for, though born in sin, we have been delivered; though born children of wrath, we have been made—?

'Children of grace,' they continued.

Miss W. And you who are taught your duties are doubly accountable. You know your Lord's will, take care that you strive to do it, looking unto Whom for help and strength?

'To God,' said some.

'To our Saviour,' said others.

'Yes, to Him,' said Miss Walton, 'Who has already begun the work of salvation in you. You must pray, that as He has, in mercy, begun a good work in you, so He will be pleased to finish it unto the day of Jesus Christ.'

Miss Walton now closed her books, and then said, 'I cannot read to you to-day, girls, but I have something to say to you before you go. I find there has been a man going about the village selling some very improper song-books. I want to know if any of you have bought any?'

'Please, Ma'am, I have,' said Alice, Sarah, and Bessie; 'I didn't know there was any harm in them.'

'Oh, Mother wouldn't let us buy them,' said Rose. 'Ruth wanted some very much, but she looked at them, and said they wer'n't fit to read.'

'So did my mother,' said Margaret.

'I saw the man,' said Mary, 'and Hannah bought some, but I didn't.'

'I didn't hear anything about him,' said Agnes. 'He didn't come to our house.'

'And you, Jane, have you got any?' asked Miss Walton.

'No, Ma'am, I hadn't any money.'

Miss W. And you, Harriet?

'No, Ma'am,' she said, quickly.

'And, please, Ma'am, I haven't got any,' said Anna, as Miss Walton turned to her.

'Very well,' said Miss Walton. 'Then only Bessie, Alice, and Sarah, have them. Have you read them?'

'No, Ma'am, I've not,' said Alice.

'Please, Ma'am, I looked at mine, but I didn't read it all,' returned Sarah.

'I've read most of mine,' said Bessie.

'I am sorry you have, Bessie. If you have got any of the same books as were shown to me, I don't think you could read many lines without seeing what is not fit for a Christian child to read; and I am sure you could not read much, or scarcely look at the pictures, without your mind's being defiled. You know what Solomon says: "Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" and Job: "Can a man touch pitch, and not be defiled?" No more can you choose to read what is wrong and unchaste without being defiled, without losing that innocency which David bids you guard. "Keep innocency, and take heed to the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last." Every Christian child is bound to turn away from everything that can defile her. Have you all got your purchases here?'

'Yes, Ma'am,' they replied, pulling out of their pockets some little books.

'Now will you give them to me?' asked Miss Wal-

ton; 'and as you did not know, when you bought them, that there was any harm in them, I will either give you what you paid for them, or other books in their place.'

'Oh yes! Ma'am, if you like,' said Alice and Sarah, readily handing their books; but Bessie rather hesitated.

'Won't you give up yours, Bessie?' asked Miss Walton.

'Please, Ma'am, I don't think there is any harm in it, it's only a song.'

'May I look?' asked Miss Walton.

Bessie handed it to her; and Miss Walton glanced it over, and then closing it with a pained expression, said,

'Bessie, you may be too young, and, as yet, too pure, to see all the evil of these words; but, believe me, my dear girl, they are not fit for you to read; they can but lead you to the knowledge of evil as you come to understand them, and must defile your mind; and, oh! remember, ignorance of evil is a great blessing. Were not Adam and Eve much happier before they knew evil?'

'Yes, Ma'am,' replied one or two.

Miss W. Indeed they were; the moment they knew good and evil, evil had defiled them; they only knew evil by sad experience; and it is the same still. Do not wish to know evil, for you cannot know it without being defiled by it, and losing the renewed innocency given in your Baptism. This little book will teach you evil, not good. Won't you give it up willingly, Bessie, and take another in its place?

'Yes, Ma'am,' she replied, 'if you like,' with much more readiness.

During this conversation, had Miss Walton been noticing Harriet, she would have seen that she *changed* colour many times, and that, when Miss

Walton first offered to change the books, Harriet put her hand to her pocket, but quickly withdrew it. Miss Walton, however, was not observing her, and, on Bessie's submission, she took down a little parcel of books of a larger size than those taken away, which she now threw into the fire. She then spread the new books out on the table, saying to the three girls,

'Take your own choice, girls;' or I will give you money if you wish.'

'Please, Ma'am,' said Alice, blushing very deeply, 'I should like the penny, for Mother was angry with me for spending it.'

'Very well, here it is,' said Miss Walton, handing her one from the mantel-piece. 'I'm afraid these little books have already made you do wrong in spending the penny, if it was not quite your own.'

'Oh, yes, Ma'am, it was my own,' she said; 'only I ought to have kept it for shoes. I was putting by for them. I wouldn't have paid away Mother's.'

'I hope, indeed, you wouldn't,' said Miss Walton; 'for that would be stealing.'

In the mean time, Sarah and Bessie were busy looking over the books, and the other girls had pressed forward to do the same.

'Oh, look! Bessie, this is such a pretty book,' said Agnes; 'and it is lines, too, like the one you bought.'

Bessie took it out of her hands, and decided upon it; and Sarah's choice being made, the girls, well pleased, soon departed.

Well pleased, I say, but there was one far from being well pleased, and that was Harriet; and no wonder, for she had been telling a falsehood. She, too, had bought a little book, and had it in her pocket at that moment; and had she known that Miss Walton would have given others for those she took away, Harriet would have gladly exchanged;

but when Miss Walton asked who had bought, fearing to lose it, or that Miss Walton would be angry, she had told the falsehood, and said *she* had not. She regretted the word the moment she heard of the exchange, but it was then too late—she had told the falsehood, and she was ashamed to confess it; and now, as the other girls were looking over their books, and handing them one to another, Harriet was vexed, for she had glanced through her book, and didn't think she should care much about it. I am sorry to say it was not the sin that distressed her, but the consequence—the loss of the prettier book. She walked on alone and silent for some time, while the rest, with easy consciences, talked merrily.

'I wish I had bought one from the man, and then I should have got a pretty book instead,' cried little Ruth.

'Oh no, Ruth, perhaps you would have read it, and then it might have hurt you,' said Margaret.

'But perhaps I shouldn't, and then I should have got another all the same.'

'I'm sure this must have cost more than a penny,' said Sarah, 'which is all I gave for my book.'

'What do you think mine was about?' said Bessie.

'I don't know,' replied one or two.

'Well, I'll tell you,' she returned.

'No *don't*e, Bessie,' said Margaret; 'if it wasn't good to read, it isn't good to hear.'

'Nonsense; there was no harm in it, I'm sure;' and she began to tell.

Margaret, Rose, and some others, at once walked away, but the rest listened; amongst this number was little Ruth. She had not heard what Margaret said, being a little behind, and had just joined the party again as Bessie began.

Rose called her to come home quickly, wishing to get her away, but she would not leave. Her *conscience* told her some of the things Bessie repeated

were not right, but she was interested, and wanted to hear more.

Anna had listened a moment, but soon exclaimed, 'Oh, Bessie! I'm sure you'd better stop,' and ran on after the others.

Alice, too, had walked with Bessie a few steps, and then joined the others, as Rose was just saying,

'What a shame it is of Bessie; and I'll tell Mother of our Ruth,' and Margaret answered,

'I wish she'd come away;' but Alice said nothing.

By the time Bessie had finished her story, only Ruth and Harriet were listeners. They went on talking together for some time, when Harriet slyly pulled out her book, saying,

'Look here! I've got a book all the time!'

'Oh, Harriet!' exclaimed Ruth, 'how could you?' while Bessie laughed and said,

'How did you manage to keep it? you must have told a fib.'

Harriet replied, frightened,

'You won't tell, will you?'

'No, it's only the Lunns who tell,' said Bessie.

'I'm sure I'm not going to tell,' said Ruth.

'Wouldn't you like to read it?' asked Harriet, carefully putting it out of sight.

'Yes; what is it about?' asked Bessie.

'I don't know quite; I haven't read it all,' said Harriet; 'but if you'll come to that field behind our house, after tea, we can all read it—won't you? I dar'n't let Jane see that I've got it; she'd go tell Mother.'

'Yes, I'll come,' replied Bessie; but Ruth didn't speak.

'And you'll come too, Ruth, won't you?' asked Harriet.

Another time I think Ruth would have said no, but she had *been already* doing wrong, and her curi-

osity was excited. She had looked at the pictures, as Harriet held it open for a moment, and wanted to know what they were about. She only answered,

‘I dar’n’t. If Mother found it out!’

‘Oh, she won’t know where you go to, and we can sit just behind the stack, where nobody will see us. You may as well come, Ruth.’

Ruth knew it would be wrong to go, wrong to listen to the story when she got there, after what Miss Walton had said, and yet she wished to go. She only feared being found out, for just then she forgot that one Eye was always upon her. She did not listen to the voice of her conscience, calling her to turn away from the temptation, to remember the vows of Baptism, and walk worthy of her high calling; so she replied,

‘I can’t promise, but I’ll come if I can.’

Just then they had reached the garden-gate to her house, where stood Agnes and several others; and Rose came running out, saying,

‘Yes, Agnes, Mother would like you to come and stay with us till Church-time, and get your tea with us, so let Matthew tell your mother.’

This was soon arranged, for her brother Matthew was not far off with a group of boys.

Ruth looked very flushed as she came up to her companions, and an expression of disappointment passed over her face as she saw that Agnes was going to stay with them. Another time she would have been so glad. She managed to whisper to Harriet,

‘I don’t think I shall be able to come now;’ while she replied,

‘Yes, you *must*; you’ll not be missed so much if she’s there.’

Agnes liked staying at the Lunn’s, for she was fond of both Rose and Ruth; but somehow, to-day, Ruth didn’t seem like herself; she didn’t talk *much*; her cheeks still burned.

'What makes you have such rosy cheeks?' asked her mother; and she replied, frightened,

'Nothing.'

But though thus inwardly uneasy, though she might have been saved from her sin, if she would, and though, as it seemed, Agnes had been sent on purpose to help her, Ruth would not give up the idea of going to the reading. She was bent upon satisfying her curiosity, and so she despised the voice which spoke within, and would have led to better things.

As soon as tea was over, she slipped out into the garden, and was vexed to find that Agnes had followed her.

'Where are you going?' asked Agnes; 'may I come with you?' as she saw Ruth's hand upon the latch.

'Yes,' she replied, hardly knowing what to say; 'I'm only going to Harriet for a few minutes.'

'What for?' asked Agnes.

Alas! how one sin leads to another!

'I only want to speak to her,' was Ruth's reply; and the two walked on together, Ruth very silent. It was only a few steps, and they entered the field.

Harriet and Bessie were behind the stack, peeping for them.

'There she is! but Agnes is with her; that will never do,' said Harriet.

'Leave her to me,' said Bessie. And as the two girls came up, Bessie said, 'Oh, Agnes! are you come too? We are going to read one of—of—Miss Walton's books.'

'Oh are you! the one you got? Oh do let us,' she replied, innocently.

'We'll sit down here then.' And the three girls seated themselves behind the stack, Agnes thinking no evil, Ruth more and more uncomfortable, Harriet hardly knowing what was coming next.

'Let's have your book first,' said Bessie, 'then here's mine.'

Harriet took out her's and began to read, but had not read many lines, when Agnes said, in her own quiet way,

'You said you were going to read one of Miss Walton's books; that's not one, I'm sure; I shall go away,' rising up as she spoke.

'Nonsense, Agnes, never mind, we'll read the other directly,' said Bessie; 'Ruth doesn't mind, you see.'

'No, I shall go,' she said; 'I'm sure that's one of the books Miss Walton told us not to read.'

'Well, you're not reading it, you are only listening,' said Harriet.

'That's just as bad; if you don't read the other I shall go away. Do come, Ruth.'

'No, Ruth's not coming,' said Bessie, 'she fixed to come here. You shan't spoil all our pleasure. Go, if you want to go, and let us alone.'

Agnes turned sorrowfully away, and Ruth sat still, though now longing to go, for Agnes's few quiet words had opened her eyes to the sin of her conduct, but now fear of Bessie's ridicule kept her seated.

'How ridiculous Agnes makes herself! why did you bring her, Ruth?' said Bessie.

'I didn't bring her,' she replied, half crying; 'she ran after me, and asked if she might come.'

'And did you tell her what you were coming for?' asked Harriet.

This question brought Ruth's untruth to her mind, and she could hardly command her voice to answer,

'No.'

'Well! she'll go and tell your mother now,' said Bessie, 'and you *will* catch it!'

'No, she's not going, she's walking up and down *there*,' said Harriet, 'so do let's go on.'

'Let me go, then,' said Ruth.

'No, you shan't go!' they both cried out, while

Bessie caught hold of her; 'never mind that sneaking thing. I'll watch that she doesn't go out of sight and tell.'

Ruth did not struggle, but sat still, with burning cheeks, and throbbing heart, longing to go, yet not having the courage to resist her two companions, while Harriet read a few pages. Ruth didn't hear much of them, for she was too unhappy to listen. Presently Bessie cried out,

'Hark! somebody is calling you, Ruth! It's your mother's voice, I'm sure, from the bottom of the garden.'

'Oh! what shall I do!' exclaimed Ruth.

'Why, slip out into the road, through the hedge here; there's Agnes waiting for you at the gate; she'll never know where you've been;' but before Ruth could get through the hedge, Harriet cried,

'There's your mother at the gate talking to Agnes.' In her hurry, Ruth's dress caught to the hedge, and she tore it. This completed her fright, and she burst into tears, while her mother, who only learned from Agnes that Ruth was in the field with Bessie and Harriet, caught sight of her, and walked quickly towards her.

'What are you doing here, Ruth?' she asked, with displeasure, 'climbing through the hedge, and tearing your dress. Just look here,' she continued, holding up the rent skirt, 'I thought you were in mischief when James told me he'd seen you run here.'

Ruth could only answer by sobs, and Agnes stood by, looking very unhappy, while Harriet and Bessie had run away and left Ruth to her fate.

'What did you come here for? tell me directly,' said her mother.

Ruth tried to speak, but could not, and Mrs. Lunn turned and asked Agnes.

'She said she was going to speak to Harriet,' was Agnes's reply.

‘Was that all?’ she asked again of Ruth.

‘No,’ sobbed Ruth. ‘Tell her, Agnes.’

Agnes then told how they had begun to read of the forbidden books, but she did not tell, for did not know, that Ruth had gone on purpose for reading.

Mrs. Lunn was much displeased, and said, ‘I know I forbade you to have anything to do with the books, and I’ve often forbidden you to make companions of those two girls. You are a very naughty child, Ruth, and you shall go straight to bed;’ Mrs. Lunn led home the unresisting child, now brokenhearted.

‘Oh! do forgive her, Mrs. Lunn,’ said little Agnes. ‘Don’t send her to bed this time; I’m sure I’m sorry.’

‘I hope she is,’ returned Mrs. Lunn, ‘but I will punish her, Agnes. I will not be disobeyed in any way.’

Ruth knew she deserved the punishment, and not say a word to avert it, and very soon afterwards she was sobbing in bed, while the rest had gone down to evening church.

There we must leave her for the present. It is well, I think, that she did sob and mourn over her sad fall, more grievous, as Miss Walton would have said, because, as a child of grace, she might have been delivered. But she forgot this; and though she knew her Lord’s will, in this instance she did it. We trust, however, that her repentance would be rejected, and that her tears, which she now shed in loneliness and penitence, would be accepted of God, her Father, through Jesus Christ, her Saviour.



LESSON LXVIII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE INWARD GRACE OF BAPTISM.

At first, Ruth only sobbed as she lay in bed from a feeling of intense misery, without thinking over the particulars of her fault; but presently, when all was quite quiet, (for her father, who was keeping house, went out and locked the door after him,) she checked her sobs, and began to think how it had all come about.

Ruth was only a little girl, and was not able to look deeply into her conduct unassisted; but she knew enough to feel that her fault began when she first listened to Bessie's story, and would not go away when Rose called her. She had not listened a minute, before she knew that Bessie was telling the story out of one of the books which Miss Walton had just said were not fit to read, and yet she had gone on listening; and Ruth knew her fault had begun from that moment, and that, after that, she had been led from one sin to another. She now remembered saying to her mother that nothing made her cheeks burn, although she knew all the time what was the cause of it, and she thought of her falsehood to Agnes.

The more little Ruth thought, the more was she overwhelmed with grief and dismay, and her tears began again to flow. She felt frightened to remember she was alone in the house, though, at another time, she wouldn't have cared a bit about it; and she

longed for her mother to come back from church. She did so want to tell her all—then the thought of church doubled her grief. She loved going to church, and singing, and now she was shut out from it, and she felt that she wasn't fit to be there, or to pray to God, and sing hymns, as she had done before.

How long the time seemed to poor little Ruth, in her misery, before she heard the door unlock, and her mother's voice down-stairs! and she thought she heard another voice also; she felt sure it was Miss Walton's. She listened breathlessly to hear if her mother were coming up-stairs, and yet, when she did hear her step, it made her tremble. The moment, however, her mother entered the room, Ruth sat up in bed, and exclaimed, 'Oh, Mother, I'm so sorry.'

Mrs. Lunn came up to the bed, and sitting down on the side, said,

'I hope you are, Ruth, and that you will now tell me all about it.'

As collectedly as her sobs would let her, Ruth told her mother the whole, and then, throwing her arms round her mother's neck, said,

'Will you forgive me, Mother dear?'

'Yes, Ruth, I will forgive you; but I'm very grieved to think you should have wished to hear any of those books, when both Miss Walton and I had told you that they were not fit for a Christian child to read.'

'Yes, Mother, I know it was very naughty; and Miss Walton had just been saying so much about it. I don't know what came over me. When she talked about them, I was glad I hadn't bought one; and then, when Bessie began to tell her story, I wanted to hear more, and I thought I wouldn't care for what you and Miss Walton had said. Oh, Mother! what will Miss Walton say when she knows?'

'She will be very grieved, Ruth; she knows that you are naughty now, for she asked me where you were as we came up from church, and I told her all that I knew; but I didn't know then you had gone by appointment.'

'Then she knows about the books! Oh, Mother! she will never trust me again! What must I do?'

'I think you'd better tell her all about it, Ruth; she's coming here again in a few moments with a book, and perhaps would take the trouble to speak to you.'

'Oh, Mother! will *you* tell her?' asked Ruth, imploringly.

'Would you wish her to know all, Ruth?' asked Mrs. Lunn.

'Yes, Mother, she'd better know all; but I shall be so ashamed to see her; and Mr. Walton too! Oh! I wish I hadn't done it!'

As Ruth said this, Rose called from the foot of the stairs to her mother, that Miss Walton was coming; and Mrs. Lunn, after kissing Ruth in token of forgiveness, went down-stairs.

'I'm afraid I've interrupted your conversation with Ruth,' said Miss Walton, as Mrs. Lunn entered the room.

'Oh, no! Ma'am, you've not; she wants you to know all about her conduct, and has asked me to tell you.' And Mrs. Lunn went on to tell, as nearly as she could, all that Ruth had told her; and, therefore, of course, not hiding the share that Bessie and Harriet had had in it.

'Poor little Ruth!' said Miss Walton; 'she certainly has been very much to blame, but her conduct is not as bad as the others'; *she* has been led on, and *they* have both sinned themselves, and been her tempters.'

'Yes, Ma'am,' said Mrs. Lunn; 'Bessie is such a thoughtless girl. I don't like my children to have

more to do with her than they can help. I've not said so much against Harriet, for she is a little girl, and I didn't think even Ruth would be led by her; but she's terribly deceitful, as her mother knows.'

'May I speak to Ruth?' asked Miss Walton.

'If you'll be so kind, Ma'am. I don't think she'll be happy till she knows you've forgiven her, though she's very frightened at the thought of seeing you.'

Mrs. Lunn led the way up-stairs, and Miss Walton followed her.

'Here's Miss Walton kind enough to come and speak to you, Ruth,' said Mrs. Lunn.

Ruth said nothing, but covered her eyes with her hands; and Miss Walton sat down.

'Ruth, my child, don't cover your face from me,' said Miss Walton, kindly. 'It is not I against whom you've sinned so much. I want you to think Who it is.'

'Mother,' she replied.

'Yes, you have sinned against your mother, because you disobeyed her; but Who has commanded you to obey your mother and teachers?'

'God,' she replied.

'Yes, my child; and I want you to think of *this*, instead of being frightened of seeing me. Your mother has told me all about your fault, but I hope now, Ruth, you are really sorry for it.'

'Indeed, indeed I am, Ma'am,' she replied, tears again starting into her swollen eyes.

'Well then, Ruth, your mother has forgiven you, and I have forgiven you; but have you asked God to forgive you?'

'No,' she replied; 'I thought more about you and Mother.'

'Yes; and it was right you should think about this, but I want you to think about God too. You know you have been made His little child, and when *you sin*, you are sinning against your Father, and

your Saviour,—your Father Who has loved you so much as to give His Son to die for you; and your Saviour, Who dwells with you by His Holy Spirit, to help you to do right.’

‘Yes,’ she replied, in a low tone; ‘and you said that was worse than heathen’s sinning. I’m so sorry.’

‘It is worse, my child, because it is sinning against so much love. Is it not worse if *you* disobey your mother, than if a little stranger child, who hardly knew her, were to disobey her?’

‘Yes, much worse,’ she answered.

‘So it is worse in us,’ continued Miss Walton, ‘who have been made children of grace, to disobey God, than for those who do not know Him. When we sin, we turn again to that from which He delivered us in our Baptism. We turn again to sin, though He has delivered us, and caused us to be new-born unto righteousness. Your mother tried to save you from the sin of reading those books, by not allowing you to buy them: and by forbidding you to make companions of those children who do not seem to be trying to do right, she wished to save you from their bad example, but you wouldn’t be saved—you ran into danger. So God, your Father, would save you from sin, and lead you to righteousness; but then you must not run into danger, or all He has done, and is willing to do for you, will be of no avail. To-day you have turned to sin, instead of turning away from it.’ After a moment’s silence, she continued, ‘Didn’t you know you were doing wrong in listening to Bessie?’

‘Not just at first, Ma’am. I didn’t know what she was telling; but when she said, “I suppose Miss Walton would say that was wrong,” then I knew.’

‘And what did your conscience tell you then, Ruth?’

‘Not to listen,’ she replied; ‘but—but I wanted to hear.’

‘And when Rose called you away, what did your conscience tell you?’

‘That I ought to go; but I thought I wouldn’t go for *her*; that Bessie would say I dar’n’t stay.’

‘And who spoke to you by your conscience, Ruth?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘God’s Holy Spirit,’ she said, sorrowfully.

‘Yes, God’s Holy Spirit, Who has dwelt with you ever since you were made God’s child, to help you to die to sin, and live unto righteousness; and yet you would not listen to His voice; and you went on hearkening to Bessie’s story, and then wished to hear Harriet’s story. And you went against God’s will (which you knew) when you promised to go to the field. And then, to cover your faults, you said what was not true, twice, though God has said to Christians especially, “Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man.” I’m afraid you led Agnes into disobedience too, for I suppose she listened.’

‘Oh, no, she didn’t; she wouldn’t listen when she knew what it was; she went away directly, and I wanted to go then, but they said I shouldn’t; and I was afraid of Bessie, and sat still.’

‘I’m glad to hear of that, Agnes; but you see how sin had made *you* a coward. I think another time you’d have gone away too; and all this because you did not listen to God speaking to you at the beginning, but allowed yourself to be curious, and then to be too proud to be led by Rose. It is, then, against *God your Father*, you have sinned most of all.’

Ruth only cried without speaking, and Miss Walton continued, ‘You said just now it would be worse for *you* to disobey your mother than for a little stranger; but which would your mother be most ready and willing to forgive?’

‘Me,’ she replied.

‘Yes; why?’ asked Miss Walton.

'Because she is my mother.'

'Because you are her child, and she loves you. So your Father in heaven—what is He willing to do, think you?'

'To forgive me,' she said.

'Yes, through Jesus Christ, if you humbly confess your sins, and ask Him. If your sin is greater, as being against your Father, His love is greater too, because you are His child. So now, will you ask Him to forgive you, as you have asked your mother and me to forgive you?'

'Yes,' she replied; 'I haven't said my prayers yet.'

'Then, when I leave you, had you not better get up, and put a shawl about you, and kneel down, and say your prayers, and tell God you are sorry for your sin, and ask Him to forgive you for Christ's sake?'

'Yes, Ma'am,' she replied, 'I will.'

'And He will forgive you, my dear child; and then you must try to turn your eyes from sin, and shut your ears to temptation for the time to come, and to listen when God speaks. Now I will say good night, and may God bless you.'

'Good night, Ma'am,' she replied, in a low voice; and no sooner was Miss Walton down-stairs, than she did as she had promised. Then, with a child-like confidence in a Father's love and forgiveness, she lay down again, and was soon asleep.

Miss Walton was grieved to think of Ruth's sin; but she was still more grieved, because more hopeless, when she thought of Harriet and Bessie. She turned her steps, however, towards the cottage of the former, intending to speak to her at once. She was not at home, however, so Miss Walton then contented herself with telling her mother about it, and begging her to take away the book. Mrs. Grant, greatly displeased, promised to do so, and begged Miss Walton to punish Harriet.

'I must do so,' she replied, 'and publicly too, for her falsehood is known by all the rest of the girls. If you will send her up to me to-morrow morning, I will speak to her.'

It was too late then to go to Bessie, and Miss Walton, weary and sorrowful, turned her steps homeward.

The next morning Harriet came to the Vicarage, and Miss Walton talked to her for a long time, trying to lead her to feel the greatness of her fault; but though Harriet allowed most that Miss Walton said, and answered many questions she asked, she did not shed a tear the whole time. When Miss Walton asked if she were sorry, she said 'Yes;' but there was nothing very hearty in the tone; and a moment afterwards she said,

'Ruth always tells everything.'

'Do you suppose, then, that Ruth told me about your falsehood, Harriet?' asked Miss Walton.

'Yes,' she replied.

'Then you are mistaken, for she did not; she never mentioned your name to me, though she told me of her own fault.'

Harriet opened her eyes with surprise, for she had been all the time feeling indignant, thinking that Ruth had told on purpose to bring her into disgrace.

'Ruth has been in fault as well as you,' said Miss Walton; 'but you have only to do with your own fault. You know the place in which liars will have their portion; and oh! Harriet, terrible it will be if, instead of inheriting the Kingdom prepared for the children of God, which you might have had, you are cast out into the lake of fire, because you chose the ways of sin; because you would not try to live as becomes the child of God. If you are really sorry, God will forgive you; but you cannot deceive Him. *If you are not truly sorry, He knows it, and your guilt*

will remain upon you. I wish you would think alone over your sin against your heavenly Father, and ask Him to make you sorry, so that He may accept your penitence, through Jesus Christ. And now I must punish you, Harriet, by not allowing you to come to the evening school for a month; and you must give me back your conduct ticket for last Sunday, after the afternoon lesson, next Sunday.'

Harriet looked half angry, and in a whisper said, 'Then Ruth won't come to school.'

'Harriet, you have nothing to do with Ruth,' said Miss Walton, with serious displeasure. 'Leave me, for I cannot talk longer to a child who shows so little true sorrow. If you were really sorry, you'd think of yourself, not Ruth.'

Miss Walton also spoke to Bessie that day; and though at first she, too, was high, and said Ruth had told Miss Walton, when she found this not to be the case, she acknowledged her own faults, and submitted to the punishment of a fortnight from the evening school, without any complaint.

Ruth having been already punished by her mother, and her fault being more against Mrs. Lunn than Miss Walton—more private than public—Miss Walton did not think it right to punish her in the same way, but gave her some texts to learn, and to say one to her every day in school that week. She did this less as a punishment, than to keep her fault in her mind; and Ruth never failed to learn her lesson perfectly.

We may now join Miss Walton's lesson on the following Sunday. When the Catechism had been repeated, Miss Walton said,

'We saw, last Sunday, that it was necessary that we should die to sin, and be new-born to righteousness—why?'

Several. Because we are 'by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath.'

Miss W. How came we to be born in sin?

Several. Because of Adam's fall.

Miss W. Whereby man's nature was corrupted, and he estranged from God. Now, to-day, we will consider more closely the inward grace, or favour, bestowed upon fallen men in Baptism. What did our Saviour say a man requires before he can enter into the kingdom of heaven?

Mary. New birth. 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' (St. John, iii. 3.)

Miss W. But you say, before we can be born again, we must die. What life must die?

Agnes. The life of sin.

Miss W. Therefore Baptism is first appointed to be—what?

All. 'A death unto sin.'

Miss W. Yes; to the original sin in which we are born, and by which our nature is corrupted. Then follows—?

Ruth. 'A new birth unto righteousness.'

Miss W. It is then exactly what we needed—something to restore to us what Adam lost. What did he lose?

Agnes. Innocency.

Miss W. Yes; and, therefore, being guilty, he was driven out of the garden of Eden—why?

Several. Lest he should 'put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.' (Gen. iii. 22.)

Miss W. Then he lost innocency, and with it—?

'Life,' said Margaret.

Miss W. And what came into the world?

Several. Death.

Miss W. And, as we saw last Sunday, all mankind in him lost their innocency, and so died to true life, but lived to death—were dead in sin, and alive to their evil lusts and passions. But in Baptism we are born again to a—?

'New life,' said Emily.

Miss W. 'Unto'—what?

All. 'Righteousness.'

Miss W. And, instead of death *in* sin, it is to us a death—?

'To sin,' said Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; the guilt of the sin in which we are born is washed away, so that we can rise to newness of life. Our false life dies, for Baptism is—?

'Death unto sin,' said Rose.

Miss W. But it is also *life*, because, from being dead in sin, guilty before God, we are *new-born*—to what?

All. Righteousness.

Miss W. Thus, by Baptism, is given back to us that which Adam lost—innocency and life. The guilt of original sin is washed away, and the tree of life is free to us again, though we are weakened by Adam's fall. Our life, ever afterwards, must be a battle with sin, to which we die; and though the guilt of original sin is cleansed, the weakness of our fallen nature remains. Why do I say the tree of life is restored to us? Who is called our life?

All. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. And as Adam, through the tree of life, might have regained life, so we regain life—how?

Several. Through Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Yes, with Whom we are made one by Baptism. God has appointed Baptism as the way to life. The guilt of sin deprived Adam of the tree of life. Our guilt is washed away—how?

Several. In Baptism.

Miss W. Yes; and thus is opened to us a way to that tree of life from which Adam was shut out. Now tell me why our birth in Baptism is called a *new* birth?

Emily. Because it comes after our first birth.

Miss W. That is one reason. But there are others. By our first birth we were born in what?

Several. Sin.

Miss W. Our nature was corrupted by evil, but in our second we are born to—?

Several. Righteousness.

Miss W. And Who is it that sanctifies or makes us righteous?

Several. The Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Of Whom, then, is our new life?

Agnes. The Holy Spirit.

Miss W. What do we say of Him in the Nicene Creed?

Bessie. 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life.'

Miss W. Yes; our birth at Baptism, then, is called new, because it is the beginning of—what?

Margaret. A new life.

Miss W. And that life is the life of the Holy Spirit within us. He is the principle of our new life, for He is the Giver of life. Of what, besides water, did our Saviour say we must be born?

Ruth. The Spirit. (St. John, iii. 5.)

Miss W. And what does St. Paul tell us we must do to preserve our new life? Rom. viii. 13, 14.

Jane. 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.'

Miss W. But we can only mortify the deeds of the body and live—how?

Several. Through the Spirit.

Miss W. Yes; He who was the Giver of spiritual life in Baptism, must also sustain it unto the end, that we may grow in righteousness, walk as sons of God, and keep innocency. What do we pray God in the Baptismal Service to give the child, that he may be born again?

Several. 'Give Thy Holy Spirit to this infant, that he may be born again, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation.'

Miss W. And afterwards we thank God for—what?

Anna. That it has pleased Him to regenerate the infant with the Holy Spirit.

Miss W. Regenerate, or cause him to be born again. The new birth, then, is by—?

Several. The Holy Spirit.

Miss W. And it is to lead to—what?

Rose. A life of righteousness.

Miss W. Yes, it is a new birth unto righteousness. And we can only lead a life of righteousness—by Whose help?

‘God the Holy Spirit’s,’ they replied.

Miss W. Yes; because our fallen nature is weak, even after the grace of Baptism; and without the continual help of the Spirit of life, we should soon fall again under the power of sin, from which we have been delivered. Thus we see that it is a *new* birth, because it is a birth of—?

Mary. The Holy Spirit.

Miss W. And it is to be birth to a *new* life—our spiritual life—or the life of God’s Spirit within us, Whom, if we lose, we die. But, further, whose children are we by our first birth?

Emily. The children of our parents.

Miss W. But Whose by our second birth?

All. The children of God.

Miss W. Therefore, our second birth is called—?

All. A new birth.

Miss W. Because it is a birth into a new family, of which God is the Father. Now, is Holy Baptism thus spoken of in the Bible as a death and birth. Look at Rom. vi. 3, 4.

Alice. ‘Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were *baptized into His death*? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism *into death*, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’

Miss W. We are baptized into *death* that we may be *born to new life*. Now look at verses 6 and 7, and see what this death destroys.

Ruth. 'Knowing this, that *our old man is crucified* with Him, that the *body of sin might be destroyed*, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.'

Miss W. What is crucified?

Several. 'Our old man.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'our old man'?

Rose. Our natural sinfulness.

Miss W. Quite right; that sin in which we were born. And what is the end of crucifixion?

Jane. Death.

Miss W. Our old man, then, is crucified with Him—why? 'That the body'—?

'Of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin,' they continued.

Miss W. Turn now to chap. iii. and read verses 20–23.

Sarah. 'By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested . . . even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference; *for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*'

Miss W. But what does St. Paul go on to say has been done for us?

Alice. 'Being *justified freely by His grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for *the remission of sins that are past*, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.'

Miss W. In Christ Jesus we are justified or par-

freely; the guilt of sin is washed away; for He us from our sins in what three ways?

om the guilt, from the power, and from the imment,' said Rose.*

s W. We see, then, what is meant by a death in. It is not that we can never sin more, for e still weak in ourselves; but that the guilt of al sin is then washed away, so that we are no under the wrath of God for it, but are recon- n Whom?

rist Jesus,' they replied.

s W. And our old man is crucified, so that sin o longer the same power over us, except by our choice; but for the time to come—what may ?

rgaret. Destroy sin.

s W. Yes; from that hour we have ability to sin, because our old man is crucified. It is ed, and the end, unless by our own choice, will th. Sin has received its death-wound, and we rn anew unto—what?

. Righteousness.

s W. So that we may afterwards live the life teousness, by Whose power?

se. God's Holy Spirit, the Author and Giver of

s W. Like as Christ after *death* was raised to life, even so we also should after our death ptism rise to—what?

rgaret. To newness of life.

s W. To the new life of the Spirit. But s child is born into this world, is it born full i?

eral. No, it is very little, and grows every day,

s W. Yes, at first its life is weak, its strength ; but, day by day, it grows and strengthens;

so, though holy Baptism is a new birth unto righteousness, it is but *birth*. What have we yet to do

‘Grow and strengthen,’ said Mary.

Miss W. Just so. And Who did you say was the Giver of this life?

All. The Holy Spirit..

Miss W. In order, then, that this life may grow and strengthen, we must be led—by Whom?

‘The Holy Spirit,’ said one or two, again quoting, ‘If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through *the Spirit* do mortify the deeds of the body, *ye shall live*. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.’ (Rom. vi 13, 14.)

Miss W. And how does the Holy Spirit speak to us *Several*. By our consciences.

Miss W. Take heed, then, lest, in going again to them, you grieve the Holy Spirit of God, Who would lead you to righteousness. And what time is given us in which to grow?

Margaret. Our life in this world.

Miss W. Yes; some have a longer time, some shorter; but our business, whether our time be long or short, is to *cherish the life of righteousness begun in Baptism*, that it may grow and strengthen. If a little infant dies soon after Baptism, before it has committed actual sin, what do we believe about it? Look at the rubric at the end of the Baptism Service.

Jane. ‘It is certain by God’s Word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.’

Miss W. Because God perfects their life of righteousness, and sin is already dead within them; they are children of grace. But those whose time on earth is longer, must ‘*grow in grace*.’ Now you shall give me some more texts which speak of the grace of Baptism being a death, and a birth to new life. Look at Col. ii. 11–13.

Anna. 'In Whom also, (that is, in Christ,) ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in *putting off the body of the sins of the flesh* by the circumcision of Christ: *buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him* through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead. And *you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him*, having forgiven you all trespasses.'

Miss W. When were they dead in sin, and in the uncircumcision of their hearts, or their unrenewed nature?

Several. Before their Baptism.

Miss W. And when were they quickened or born to a new life?

Rose. In Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, 'wherein,' St. Paul says, 'ye are risen' with Christ; risen to newness of life. Thus we see that the new and spiritual grace in Baptism is—what?

All. 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.'

Miss W. 'Hereby,' that is by—what?

Several. Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, by Baptism made—?

All. Children of grace.

Miss W. We say children of grace for two reasons. What are we told are the wages of sin?

Several. Death.

Miss W. But is eternal life the wages of anything?

Agnes. No, it is the *gift* of God.

Miss W. So it is with the grace of Baptism, whereby we attain eternal life. It is the—?

Several. Gift of God.

Miss W. Yes; the destruction of sin, and the new

birth unto righteousness, is the gift of God, bestowed upon us without any merit of our own; therefore we are called—what?

Bessie. 'Children of grace.'

Miss W. The other reason is, that, whereas before we were children of wrath, in Baptism we are reconciled to Whom?

All. To God.

Miss W. And, therefore, become children of grace or—?

'Favour,' said Emily.

Miss W. Yes; we are from the time of our death unto sin, and our new birth of the Holy Spirit unto righteousness, reconciled to God, in His favour, beloved children of our Almighty Father, no longer strangers and foreigners, but—?

Several. 'Fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.' (Eph. ii. 19.)

Miss W. And what is God's appointed means for giving unto us this great grace?

Sarah. 'Water; wherein the person is baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. And have these great blessings been given to us?

Several. Yes, Ma'am.

Miss W. Yes; given unto us in our young days, before sin had had its full power over us. But now look how St. Paul exhorts those who have received such grace, and are called to such a holy calling. Eph. iv. 1-3.

Alice. 'I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'

Miss W. Yes; we may, by our own faults, lose all

these blessings: unless we strive to walk worthy of our calling, we shall lose them. Look further in this chapter, how St. Paul bids Christians walk. Verse 22, &c.

Harriet. 'That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts: and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.'

Miss W. They were not, after putting off the old man, to live according to it, but they were to grow in the life of righteousness to which they were born. So must we from our very childhood; we must strive to grow in righteousness, and never to listen to the voice of the old man, which would drag us back again to the death of sin. St. Paul goes on to mention particular duties for those new-born to righteousness. You may read them, each to a full stop.

'Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another,' Ruth read, while the blush came to her cheek.

Emily. 'Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil.'

Jane. 'Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.'

Margaret. 'Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.'

Miss W. You see you are to avoid corrupt communication. This was why I wished you not to read improper books; that which is corrupt is communicated to you as much in reading bad books, as in speaking bad things. Some of you, I am grieved to

think, would not take my warning, but chose to repeat to others what was corrupting.

Bessie turned very red as Miss Walton said this, and looked down. Ruth did the same; but Harriet looked indifferent. Miss Walton then bade them go on reading.

Sarah. 'And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.'

Anna. 'Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.'

Miss W. Yes; these are some few of the duties in which we must grow, if we would live the life of righteousness to which we were new-born. And, as I said before, the grace of Baptism was only the birth not the full growth to which we must attain in order to reach the end; to come to life everlasting. Supposing a child is born into this world, to a rich inheritance which will be his when his education is finished, and he has grown to an appointed age. How might he lose it, although born to it?

Several. By dying before he came to the age.

Miss W. Right. In any other way?

Rose. By refusing to be educated.

Miss W. Just so it is with us. We are new-born inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven, but how may we lose it? In what are we to be educated?

Agnes. God's commands.

Miss W. Yes; we are to rule ourselves by His will; to be taught by, and walk in, His commandments; to let the life of righteousness be ours; and if we don't do this, what will be the consequence?

Several. We shall lose our inheritance.

Miss W. Or, if we return to the sin to which, in Baptism, we died,—if we die in it again, will the life of righteousness, to which we were new-born, grow?

'No, Ma'am,' they replied again.

Miss W. And what will be the consequence?

Mary. We shall lose the inheritance.

Miss W. Even though we were born to it?

Margaret. Yes, if we turn back to sin.

Miss W. Then our birth will have availed us nothing; just as the birth of a child, who dies before he has attained the appointed age, will avail him nothing towards obtaining his inheritance. But cannot you tell me what great difference there is between our new birth to our inheritance, and the child's birth to an earthly inheritance?

After waiting a moment, Agnes said,

'It's our own fault if we lose our inheritance.'

Miss W. Quite true. If we lose the life given to us, it is our own fault: if we refuse to be taught as God would teach us, or walk in the way He appoints to our inheritance, the fault is our own, and the consequence will be worse than simply losing our inheritance; for what is awaiting the ungodly?

Rose. Eternal punishment.

Miss W. You may look at Rom. vi. 11, what St. Paul says to us as Christians.

Ruth. 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the death, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.'

Miss W. It is of little use being dead unto sin in *Baptism*, unless, as you grow up, you look upon yourselves as dead, and act as one dead. Can a dead person see the things around him, or hear voices, or take an interest in human affairs?

'No, it is all still to the dead,' said Rose.

Miss W. Like a dead person to outward things, we should try to be to—what?

Several. Sin.

Miss W. Yes; we must shut our eyes to it, that we see it not; close our ears, that we hear not its temptations; take no interest in it, nor be drawn by its allurements. It must not reign within us, but be trampled under foot. Being children of grace, what does God promise? Ver. 14.

Bessie. ‘*Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*’

Miss W. He who bestowed upon us the grace to die to sin in Baptism, will, if we ask Him, enable us to keep our fallen enemy in the dust. But while we are thus dead to sin, to what must we be alive?

Several. Unto God.

Anna. Unto righteousness.

Miss W. We must yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God,—wish and pray that, as sons of God, we may be led by the Spirit of God, that our life may grow and strengthen. Risen to newness of life, what does St. Paul bid us seek?

Mary. ‘Those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.’

Miss W. Go on, Mary.

Mary. ‘Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.’ (Col. iii. 1–4.)

Miss W. You must go on with that chapter at home, it will teach you what is expected from you, being baptized. Now you must only read verses 9 and 10. Harriet, you read them.

Harriet. ‘Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.’

Miss W. You must not think, girls, that all is done for you, because, as little infants, you received the blessing of Baptism—a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; but, being thankful for this, you must take heed that you do not forfeit the blessing, and strive very earnestly, by the help of God's Holy Spirit dwelling in you, utterly to abolish the whole body of sin, and to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, when the lesson was over, Miss Walton said,

‘Harriet and Bessie, have you brought your tickets?’

‘Yes, Ma’am,’ they replied; and handing them to her, Bessie looked ashamed; Harriet as indifferent as she could.

‘I’m sorry to have to take them,’ said Miss Walton; ‘but I hope it will help you for the future to be more guarded. You both sinned with your tongues; one by telling a falsehood, the other by repeating what was impure; and both were disobedient to my wishes. Your faults, too, were public, so your punishment must be public too. Harriet for a month, Bessie for a fortnight, must stay away from the evening school; after that, I hope I shall see you back humbled. If you would spend five minutes every school-night in thinking over your faults, and asking God to pardon you, your punishment would be blessed to you. Now you must all put away the forms and go home.’

LESSON LXIX.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE COVENANT OF BAPTISM.

'I AM sorry to hear that Jane is not well, Harriet,' said Miss Walton, as she entered the room to give her class their afternoon lesson. 'Is she any better?'

'No, Ma'am, she was very sick when I left,' replied Harriet.

'Poor girl! I hope and think she will be better soon, if she perseveres in what I sent to her. I shall call in to see her either going to, or returning from church, this evening.'

Harriet did not say, 'Thank you, Ma'am,' as I think she ought to have done; and Miss Walton took her seat, and began the lesson.

'What did we say a Sacrament is besides an outward sign of grace?' she asked.

Several. A means and a pledge.

Miss W. Yes; a pledge of grace which God will give. But does God require nothing from us, in order to be meet for the promised blessing?

'Yes,' said one or two.

Miss W. 'What,' then, 'is required of persons to be baptized?'

Ruth. 'Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.'

Miss W. The blessing, then, of Baptism, is given *conditionally*. What do I mean by this?

'Upon certain conditions,' said Rose.

Miss W. Yes; which we must fulfil, or God, on His part, will not give the blessing. What does God make with us in Baptism?

'A covenant,' said little Agnes.

Miss W. That is a conditional promise. What does God promise?

Margaret. To give us grace.

'To make us His children,' added Mary.

Miss W. But upon what condition does He make this promise? What does He require of us?

Several. Repentance and Faith.

Miss W. The condition, then, is, that we go to Baptism with—what?

All. Repentance and Faith.

Miss W. And the condition must be fulfilled, in order that God's promise may be fulfilled. And what is God's appointed outward sign of this covenant?

Several. 'Water; wherein the person is baptized, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. And, by God's appointment, it is more also: it is His *pledge* of grace, and *means* of grace, as well. What was the sign of God's covenant with His ancient people?

Anna. Circumcision.

Miss W. On what condition did God make this covenant with Abraham? Look at Gen. xvii. 1, 2.

Bessie. 'The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: *walk before Me, and be thou perfect*; and I will make My covenant between Me and thee.'

Miss W. Then God goes on to promise what He would do for Abraham, and his seed, and then gave him a sign. What do you say it was?

Several. Circumcision.

Miss W. Yes; and none were admitted to the

covenant but those who received the sign. That every male should be circumcised, was part of what God required, in order that He might fulfil His promise. Look at verse 10.

Harriet. 'This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised.'

Miss W. Circumcision, then, was the sign of the covenant, and admitted to the covenant; and man, on his part, was to submit to the sign, and walk before God, and be perfect. And what was God, on His part, to do?

Margaret. To be their God, and to bless them.

Miss W. So it is with Baptism. What is it a sign of?

Sarah. God's covenant with us.

Miss W. And by it we are admitted to the covenant; and man, on his part, must go to Baptism with—what?

'Repentance and Faith,' said one or two.

Miss W. Yes; and live in them. And what does God, on His part, promise to work in us?

Rose. 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.'

Miss W. Yes; He promises forgiveness of sin, and grace to live a godly life. Do we ever read in the Bible of any covenant, except the covenant that God made with the Jews?

'Yes,' said *Mary*, repeating, 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers . . . which My covenant they brake.'

Miss W. Then what does He go on to say of the new covenant?

Several. 'This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith

the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be *their God, and they shall be My people*. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, *from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*' (Jer. xxxi. 31-34.)

Miss W. God thus promises forgiveness of sins in His new covenant—the covenant of grace; and so what did St. Peter say to those who asked, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'

Sarah. 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' (Acts, ii. 38, 39.)

Miss W. For the *remission of sins* they were to be—what?

Several. Baptized.

Miss W. The promise—the promise of the new covenant, was to them, and to their children. And what have you just told me that promise was?

Anna. 'I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.'

Miss W. Thus St. Peter explained how God was fulfilling His promise, made so long before, of making a new covenant with them in—what?

Rose. Baptism.

Miss W. And by that new covenant they were to receive—?

'Remission of sins,' said Margaret.

'And the Holy Ghost,' added Mary.

Miss W. Yes; whereby we are new-born unto righteousness. So Christ Himself taught us. Turn to St. Luke, xxiv. 46, 47.

Bessie. 'Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that *repentance and remission of sins* should be preached in His Name among all nations.'

Miss W. Now turn to St. Matt. xxviii. and read verse 19.

Sarah. 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. 'Go ye and teach,' our Saviour says; and St. Luke tells us *what* He bade them teach. What was it?

Mary. Repentance and remission of sins.

Miss W. And then baptize, conveying and sealing the promised forgiveness and grace; and so St. Peter acted as we have seen. The new covenant was made in Baptism, and the blessing of forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit were conveyed. What does St. Paul tell us Ananias said to him when sent by God to bring him into the fold?

Sarah. 'And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the Name of the Lord.' (Acts, xxii. 16; also chap. ix. 17.)

Miss W. Before Baptism, (as you saw a lesson or two ago,) how does St. Paul describe the condition of the Ephesians? (Chap. ii. 12.)

Harriet. 'At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the *covenants of promise*, having no hope, and without God in the world.'

Miss W. But after Baptism, what does he say?

Ruth. 'Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace.'

Miss W. 'He is our peace,' for we are reconciled to God in Him. In Him we have forgiveness of

Who are we told is the Mediator of the covenant? Read Heb. ix. 14, 15. After sprinkling of the blood of bulls and goats, how does Paul go on?

Anna. 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself out spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this, He is the Mediator of the New Testament, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.'

Miss W. First tell me what is meant by 'Testa-

ment. Covenant.

Miss W. Christ, then, is the Mediator—of which testament?

Verbal. The new.

Miss W. And, by means of His death, whom has He redeemed?

Margaret. Transgressors.

Miss W. And from what will the blood of Christ cleanse us?

Anna. 'From dead works to serve the living God.'

Miss W. Thus we see how forgiveness of sin, (or birth unto sin,) and a new birth unto righteousness are the blessings promised by God in the new testament. Blessings purchased—how?

M. By the blood of Christ.

Miss W. Therefore in what does the Church teach us to say we believe in the Creed?

Verbal. 'The forgiveness of sins.'

Miss W. Yes; first conveyed to us—how?

Verbal. In Baptism.

Miss W. Therefore the Nicene Creed puts this article of belief in rather different words. What are

?

Emily. 'I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.'

Miss W. We have now seen what is God's side of the new covenant; but what does He require of us, in order to fulfill His promises?

All. Repentance and Faith.

Miss W. Yes; before forgiveness, must come repentance. Now tell me whether any of the verses you have quoted, showing God's promises of forgiveness, also teach us that He requires of us repentance?

Miss Walton gave the girls time to think, and then Agnes answered,

'St. Peter said, "*Repent*, and be baptized."

Miss W. Quite right. And what were the disciples to teach, as well as remission of sins?

Several. Repentance.

Miss W. And how did St. Paul spend his time between arriving at Damascus and Ananias's coming to him?

Rose. In fasting and praying.

Miss W. For how many days?

Several. Three. (See Acts, ix. 9-11.)

Miss W. Yes; for three days the work of repentance seems to have gone on before the message came, 'Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.' You may look again at Acts, iii. 19.

Alice. 'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.'

Miss W. Repentance, then, we see, was required by God in all those who came to Holy Baptism; so that, like the baptism of St. John the Baptist, it is a baptism of repentance. What did he preach?

Ruth. 'Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' (St. Matt. iii. 2.)

Miss W. And then he baptized. What does he say of his baptism?

Anna. 'I indeed baptize you with water unto re-

penance: but He that cometh after me, is mightier than I.' (Verse 11.)

Miss W. Then for Whom was He preparing the way?

All. For Christ.

Miss W. Yes; by leading men to repentance, (which they professed by coming to his baptism,) and thus fitting them for the greater Baptism which was to follow. What does he say of Christ's Baptism?

Rose. 'He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.' (Verse 11; also St. Mark, i. 8.)

Miss W. His was to be a greater baptism, for it was not only a baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins, preparing men for Christ's forgiveness, but conveying—what gift?

Agnes. The gift of the Holy Ghost.

Miss W. Consequently, what do we find St. Paul saying and doing to those who had received St. John's baptism? Turn to Acts, xix. 3-5.

Alice. 'He said unto them, Unto what, then, were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.'

Miss W. St. John had prepared the way; he had truly baptized with the baptism of repentance; now was offered the greater Baptism of Jesus Christ, which was both to wash away their sins, and impart spiritual life. And what was required, as well as repentance, for *this* Baptism?

Sarah. To believe on Christ Jesus.

Miss W. Yes; as St. John had taught. One mightier than he was coming, on Whom they must believe, and Who would baptize with—what?

Several. The Holy Ghost.

Miss W. And now these disciples of St. John had

nothing to do but to renew their repentance, and add—what to it?

Margaret. Faith.

Miss W. Yes; faith in Christ the Saviour. St. John had said, 'I baptize you with water *unto repentance*'—teaching the people that it was to lead them to repentance, and so fit them for the other Baptism of which he spoke—the Baptism of Christ, by which (while God requires repentance) He conveys—?

'Forgiveness,' said several.

Miss W. Further; the Baptism of Christ may also be called a Baptism of repentance, because forgiveness upon repentance is open to us from the hour of our Baptism. To Whom are we then united?

Several. Christ.

Miss W. And in Him God looks favourably upon us, and is ready to forgive us when we repent of sins committed since our baptism. We should take heed, indeed, that we sin not. But *if* we sin—what does St. John tell us?

Sarah. 'We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins.' (1 St. John, ii. 1, 2.)

Miss W. He will intercede for us, and obtain our forgiveness. We believe in the forgiveness of sin, not only in Baptism, but—?

'After Baptism,' said Emily.

Miss W. Yes, on true repentance; but Baptism put us into the condition to ask for pardon. Was the Prodigal Son driven away when he returned to his Father?

Several. No; but forgiven.

Miss W. So, as sons of God in Christ Jesus, we may look for pardon of our sins. And we are made sons—when?

Several. In Baptism.

Miss W. To whom does our Saviour teach us to pray, 'Forgive us our trespasses'?

Agnes. 'Our Father.'

Miss W. Now look again at 1 St. John, chap. i. After saying that our 'fellowship is with the Father and the Son', (How came we to have this fellowship?)

Mary. Because we have been made 'a member of Christ, the child of God.'

Miss W. How?

All. In Baptism.

Miss W. After speaking, then, of this fellowship,) what does he say from verse 7 to 9?

Bessie. 'If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

Miss W. We do sin daily, but God is faithful to His promise, and will forgive; and He does it in justice, because we are one with Him who is righteous, and has paid the price of our redemption; but still the condition continues the same. St. John says He forgives *if*—what?

Ruth. 'We confess our sins.'

Miss W. Yes; a most important part of repentance, which will follow upon sorrow, the first part. But we must leave explaining what repentance is for another lesson, and then we shall see better how it is a continued work, only begun in Baptism, but to be carried on in our after life. But now I should like you to look at a few more texts, which show that our hope of forgiveness is only in Christ, Whose members we are made in Baptism. (Eph. i. 7.)

Harriet. 'In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded towards us.'

Miss W. His grace abounds towards us, 'the children of grace,' in that He extends forgiveness to all sin. Look again at Heb. vii. 25.

Sarah. 'He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God *by Him*, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.' (See also ix. 24.)

Miss W. Once more look at Rom. viii. 33, &c.

Emily. 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us.'

Miss W. God's elect none can condemn. Christ will judge them; but will He condemn those for whom He has died, and for whom He now lives to make intercession? St. Paul goes on to ask, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' Then what does he answer in verse 38 and 39?

Anna. 'I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, *which is in Christ Jesus.*'

Miss W. Being once baptized unto Him, made one with Him, nothing can separate us from Him, but *sin unrepented of, and, therefore, unforgiven*; that will, indeed, sink us into hell. But let us mourn over, confess, and forsake our sins, and we shall be surely forgiven. He who washed away our sin first in Baptism, will daily wash us in His blood, and God will look upon us as perfect *in Him*.

Miss Walton paused, and then said, 'We see, then, there is no encouragement to go on in sin, because we believe in the forgiveness of sins; for those who go on in sin are not repenting, and without repentance, there is no forgiveness. God requires of *those to be baptized—what?*'

‘Repentance,’ they all replied.

Miss W. Which must be carried on through our whole life, and must be doubled when we have fallen into any particular sin.

And now, I have a great deal more to ask you about this answer, which we must leave for another lesson. I have a bad head-ache now, so I cannot read to you, but you may walk in our garden if you like, and I will see whether I can get Mr. Walton to walk awhile with me. I dare say it will do my head good.

‘I hope it will,’ said several; while others thanked her for the permission.

Soon afterwards, Miss Walton and her brother followed the girls into the garden; and presently Miss Walton remarked to him,

‘Poor little Ruth! I am so glad to see her happy once more. She seemed so crushed by her fault.’

‘It was a good sign,’ he replied.

‘I know it was; and, on that ground, I was glad to see it,’ said Miss Walton; ‘and now, though she is happy once again, I do not think the memory of her sin will pass away.’

‘Oh! I did not mean to blame her for being happy now,’ said Mr. Walton; ‘a forgiven child may surely rejoice.’

At that moment her voice was heard exclaiming,

‘Oh *do’e* look here, Margaret, what a beautiful rose! How pure and white it is!’

Margaret stopped to look, and admired it to Ruth’s satisfaction. The two girls were still standing before it when Miss Walton and her brother approached them.

‘You are admiring that lovely white rose, girls, are you not?’ asked Mr. Walton.

‘Yes, Sir,’ they replied, with smiling faces; while Ruth, in a whisper, added, ‘It is so white.’

‘Yes; we can hardly imagine it could have been more beautiful in the garden of Eden,’ said Miss Walton, ‘before sin marred everything.’

‘It well pictures to us innocency,’ said Mr. Walton — ‘that which is undefiled by sin. You would not like to see its pure leaves soiled and torn, would you, Ruth?’

‘No, Sir,’ she replied; ‘but the leaves will turn yellow when it’s dead.’

‘Shall I tell you what I think it may teach us?’ asked Mr. Walton.

‘Please, Sir,’ they both replied.

‘You say you would not like to see those pure petals soiled; now we are flowers planted in God’s garden, and He has washed away our sins in Baptism, and looks upon us, afterwards, as pure in *Christ*; but do you think He likes to see His flowers soiled, and their beauty marred?’

‘No, Sir,’ replied Margaret.

‘And what is it that defiles us?’ he asked.

‘Sin,’ said little Ruth; her eyes filling with tears.

‘Yes; then don’t you think the purity and beauty of this rose, which we would guard so carefully from all injury, should teach us how sweet and beautiful is *innocency*, and how we should watch against sin, which will soil our baptismal purity, and pray for strength “to keep innocency, and take heed to the thing that is right?” When this rose is dead, its leaves, you say, will turn yellow, and its beauty will be lost; so if our souls are dead in sin, they are defiled, and all their purity gone, and God cannot look upon us.’

Neither of the girls spoke, though both looked thoughtful. Ruth’s eyes were cast upon the ground, and, as I said before, tears were chasing each other down her cheeks. She held Margaret’s hand, whose usually bright, cheerful, yet serious face, was now bent with pitying looks upon her, for Margaret knew of Ruth’s fault, and knew also of her penitence, so that there was nothing but what was kind and gentle in the look she bent upon the humbled little girl.

Mr. Walton, after contemplating the two for a moment with a feeling of affection, continued, laying his hand on Ruth's shoulder,

'I did not mean to bring tears, "little maid;" so now you shall tell me how we are better off than this rose would be if once its petals were soiled, and that will help to dry your tears. Could it be made pure again if once soiled? If you washed it even, could the beauty be restored,—its loveliness be the same?'

'No, Sir,' said Margaret; 'it is too tender; that would spoil the leaves.'

'Yes; if it is once stained, it is stained for ever; but is it so with us, Ruth?'

'No, Sir,' she replied, looking up into his face through her tears.

'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,' continued Mr. Walton. 'So that, though, through our own weakness, we may fall, through Him we may rise again; though our purity is, alas! so often soiled, we may be washed again in His precious blood, and be clean. Can either of you say that text from Isaiah, which promises cleansing, though our sins be of the deepest dye?'

'Yes, Ruth can say it,' returned Miss Walton; 'the one you said to me last Sunday, Ruth.'

'Though your sins be as scarlet,' she repeated, 'they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' (Isa. i. 18.)

'Then it is not with us as it is with the petals of this rose, that, once soiled, cannot be made clean again; for, through repentance, we may return to God when sin has separated us from Him, and He will cleanse us again in the blood of Christ, look upon us in Him as pure again, so that, hereafter, we may be found with every stain washed away, and be counted worthy, in Christ, to enter into the joy of our Lord.'

'This will help you to understand,' said Miss Walton, 'our lesson this afternoon; our Baptism is a

baptism of repentance, not only because repentance is required of us before we go to the Holy Sacrament, but for what other reason, did we see?"

'Because, if we repent of our sins after Baptism, God will forgive us,' said Margaret.

'Yes,' said Miss Walton; 'He will look even upon His erring children with a Father's love and willingness to forgive. As members of Christ, our suffering, crucified, risen Saviour, Who has borne the punishment of our guilt, we may claim forgiveness; sure that through Him, and for His sake, we shall be forgiven, on our true repentance.'

'Little Ruth, then, must not fret any more,' said Mr. Walton, 'but show the reality of her repentance by being very careful for the future. You will do that, won't you, Ruth?'

'Yes, Sir,' she replied; and then, as Mr. Walton seemed as if he had done speaking, she said,

'Please, Sir, won't you say something more about the rose?'

'I can tell you, or rather you can tell me, how, in another way, we are better than the rose. After it has withered and its beauty gone, will it ever come again?'

'No, Sir; others will come instead,' she replied.

'Oh! I know what you mean,' said Margaret; 'when *we* die we shall rise again.'

'And more beautiful than we are now,' added little Ruth.

'Yes, you've told me what I would say. This poor rose will die, and its bright petals, withered and soiled, will be blown away to decay; but though *we* die, unless we die with all our sins upon us, we shall rise to a joyful resurrection; this corruptible shall put on incorruption; this mortal, immortality; that which is sown in dishonour, will be raised in glory; sown in weakness, it will be raised in power; *own a natural body*, it will be raised a spiritual

body; "and the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

'And now,' said Miss Walton, stooping forward and gathering the rose, 'I think Ruth must have it, for I think she first discovered it, and so we are indebted to her for these useful pleasant thoughts;' and she handed it to the little girl.

Ruth's eyes sparkled with delight, while she exclaimed,

'Do you *really* mean I may have it to take home?'

'Yes, really,' replied Miss Walton, smiling at the child's delight; 'and try how long it will live. Change the water every day, and it will last longer.'

'Oh! thank you! thank you!' she exclaimed, as she took the treasure into her hand, and then darted off, exclaiming,

'Rose, Emily, look here! look what Miss Walton has given me!'

'How beautiful!' they exclaimed.

'And did you say she'd given it to *you*?' asked little Agnes.

'Yes, to take home. Isn't she kind?' replied Ruth. 'Look, Mary, isn't it beautiful?'

'Yes, it is a beauty. Where did it grow?'

'Just round that bush. Come along, and I'll show you.'

Several girls followed her; but Harriet, who had been standing at a little distance, looking excessively annoyed, now turned away, muttering to herself,

'Well! it is too bad! To think that *she* should get it. I wish I'd shown myself, and joined in the talk.'

It so happened, that just as Mr. Walton and his sister had gone up to Margaret and Ruth, Harriet was coming round the bush; but when she saw them, she slipped back, and stood behind listening; and then, when Mr. Walton paused as if he had done,

she slipped quietly away, fearing to be discovered. She had heard, however, all Mr. Walton had said about repentance, and how sin defiles our baptismal purity, but she did not heed it; she had only listened to hear what he would say to Ruth, to whom she had no kindly feelings; not with the wish to be benefited herself. And as she slipped away, it was with no intention of trying to do better. Those words which had brought tears of penitence to the eyes of one, fell unheeded upon the ears of the other. Harriet passed Anna as she walked along, who exclaimed, 'What's the matter, Harriet? what makes you look so cross?'

'It's enough to make any one cross, to see the way Ruth comes round everybody. There's Miss Walton been giving her a beautiful rose, as if she deserved it more than the rest!'

'Miss Walton may give a flower to whichever she likes,' said Anna. 'I suppose Ruth was looking at it, or something of the kind?'

'Yes, of course she was, and I dare say asked for it. She is such a scheming thing.'

'Oh! for shame, Harriet; poor Ruth has not done any harm to you.'

'There it goes! of course everybody must take her part,' replied Harriet, angrily; and walking quickly towards the garden gate, she slipped out, leaving her companions to enjoy the pleasures of the garden, and joined some girls who were wandering about the village, finding in them ready listeners to her complaints. She punished herself, however, as most children do when they indulge in envy and anger; for almost directly afterwards, Miss Walton called them into the fruit garden, and gave them leave to eat strawberries for five minutes. All hands were soon busily at work, and Margaret might have been seen several times giving a strawberry to less successful seekers.

Miss Walton missed Harriet, and inquired for her; and it was Ruth who jumped up and said she would go and look for her.

‘You needn’t,’ said Anna, ‘for I saw her slip out of the gate, and go home.’

‘Why has she gone home?’ asked Miss Walton; but Anna did not like to tell what she knew, and did not reply. None could imagine why she had gone, and there was some talk between the girls about it.

Ruth, in the mean time, had gathered a few in her hands, and coming up to Miss Walton, asked if she might take them to Harriet.

‘No, dear; eat them yourself,’ said Miss Walton. ‘If Harriet chooses to go away without asking leave, or saying good afternoon, she deserves to lose them.’

Ruth looked disappointed, but said no more; and when the five minutes had elapsed, Miss Walton told all the girls they must go home.

LESSON LXX.

THE SACRAMENTS.

REPENTANCE AND FAITH REQUIRED FOR BAPTISM.

It sometimes appears as if one act in a child's life became a turning point for good or evil. So it seemed to be in the cases of Ruth and Harriet, but, alas! in a different way. Until the time of their falling into the faults of which you have been told, Miss Walton had thought much the same of the two little girls; at least, she had not seen such a marked difference as from that time was too visible. She had thought Ruth a light-hearted, sparkling little thing, and a good child on the whole, though sometimes rather thoughtless; and Harriet had appeared to her much the same, only not so sparkling; and perhaps also, what faults she had were more disagreeable and open than Ruth's, and she did not take quite so much pains with her lessons. What little difference Miss Walton had noticed, was certainly in Ruth's favour; but she attributed this to the influence of her mother, and the education Ruth had at home. She was much more strictly brought up than Harriet, and had less opportunities of being naughty. I do not mean to say that there had not been a difference all along. No doubt one had tried more earnestly than the other to do right, but Miss Walton had not noticed it.

From the time, however, that they fell into sin together—and that the same kind of sin, untruth, and *the indulgence* of curiosity, at the expense of obe-

dience—their characters showed themselves widely different. You have already seen that Ruth was truly penitent—that she was sorry for her sin, and humbly confessed it, but that Harriet was indifferent; and the contrast continued as time went on: for one strove to forsake sin, and the other was less careful, less watchful, than before. The memory of Ruth's fall seemed to rest long upon her; her manner was subdued; her cheerful laugh seldom heard; and as, day by day, she had brought her texts to say to Miss Walton, her 'voice was low and gentle;' her 'glance timid and shy;' and more than once, (although Miss Walton did not refer to that particular fault, for which she was mourning,) her eyes filled with tears as Miss Walton talked over the texts. Harriet, on the contrary, seemed less thoughtful than before; her manners were boisterous instead of subdued, so that Miss Walton had several times to reprove her, even before the expiration of her punishment, for angry tones, or for talking too loud, and also for carelessness in church. But reproof was always met with a look of indifference, or of assumed indifference. Lessons, too, were more imperfect than formerly: and Harriet chose the most thoughtless girls for her companions. Miss Walton was grieved, and spoke to her alone again, striving to lead her to true repentance, and showing her how even her fall, instead of casting her far back, might be used as a starting point for pressing onward in the heavenly race. Ruth appeared to be thus using it. Her fall had made her more humble—was making her more watchful.

Harriet was to Miss Walton, just then, the source of her greatest anxiety. Most of the others were, on the whole, steady and careful; at all events, kept from any great fault.

Poor Jane, for a few days, had been very poorly, and both Mr. and Miss Walton saw her several times, and were glad to hear a good account of her

from her mother. But Jane was a girl of few words, so that it was not easy to learn much about her from herself. One thing had pleased Mr. Walton. He had noticed that Jane spoke in a fretful tone about her illness, and he had mentioned this to her, saying that it was not right, and helped her to *feel* discontented, instead of submissive; and from that time her tone changed, and even at her worst she spoke cheerfully.

Emily, too, was giving both Mr. and Miss Walton pleasure, by her continued watchfulness—not faultlessness, but watchfulness; and now the time of her confirmation was very near. It was the day before it, when Miss Walton went into the cottage, and found the usual group at work. Emily was stitching away with great diligence, until Miss Walton smilingly said,

‘What a fast work-woman you have grown, Emily; are you running a race with your mother?’

‘No, Ma’am,’ she replied, with a blush; while her mother answered,

‘No, Ma’am; but she wants to get that shirt done before to-morrow. She’s making it for her father; and she set herself to do it all without sighing over it.’

‘What! is it your habit to sigh over your work?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘Yes, Ma’am,’ she replied; ‘I do sometimes.’

‘And you thought you’d cure yourself by making a whole shirt without?’

‘Yes, Ma’am,’ she replied, smiling.

‘I hope you’ve succeeded thus far?’ said Miss Walton.

‘Oh, yes!’ said Margaret; ‘she’s never given one great sigh!’

‘And why must it be done before to-morrow?’ asked Miss Walton.

Emily did not answer; but her mother replied,

‘She wanted to cure herself before her confirmation, Ma’am, and so she fixed to have it done before then.’

Emily’s blush deepened; and Miss Walton replied, with real pleasure—for even a straw or a feather shows which way the wind blows—‘I am glad to hear it, Emily; I think I may prophesy that you will gain the day;’ while she took up one sleeve to see how the work was done.

‘It is very neat,’ she said; ‘I think I must get you to make some for Mr. Walton.’

‘Oh, Ma’am, I should like to make for him!’ she exclaimed, ‘if I could do it well enough.’

‘You could do most of it, I dare say,’ replied Miss Walton. ‘I want some shirts making for him, so I shall cut them out, and let your mother and you together make them for me.’

‘Thank you, Ma’am,’ returned Mrs. Freeward; ‘we shall be very glad of the work.’

Now we will join the Sunday lesson after Emily’s confirmation; and when the lesson is over, I will tell you some particulars about the confirmation.

Jane was not quite well enough to be of the party, but the rest of the girls were all there; and Miss Walton said,

‘Tell me again what is required of persons to be baptized?’

Several. ‘Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.’

Miss W. How many things are required?

Several. Two: Repentance and Faith.

Miss W. We saw, last Sunday, from the Bible, that these are indeed required. Now tell me of what are we to repent?

Anna. Our sins.

Miss W. What are we to feel about our sins?

Several. Sorry.

Miss W. And what is this sorrow to lead us to do?

Rose. To forsake sin.

Miss W. And when must those who ask for Baptism set about forsaking it?

Sarah. At once.

Miss W. And how long must they continue to forsake it, if they would finally be saved?

Several. All their lives.

Miss W. But can they, in act and deed, forsake it for the future? For example, if a man has been used to tell falsehoods, and practise deceit, if he repents truly, what will he be endeavouring to do all the time he is preparing for Baptism?

Rose. To speak the truth.

Miss W. Certainly; but can he be quite sure that he will never tell a lie again in the next ten years?

Several. No, Ma'am; he couldn't be *sure* of that.

Miss W. No; he does not know how he may be tempted, or how, in a moment of unwatchfulness, the tempter may gain an advantage over him. But supposing he made up his mind, that, as he was sure to fall into the sin again some time or other, it was not worth while to watch against it, and try to keep from it. How would it be then?

Margaret. He would not be really repenting.

Miss W. No; he would have no 'repentance, whereby we forsake sin.' By repentance, then, what do we do for the present?

Agnes. Actually forsake sin.

Miss W. And for the future?

Ruth. Steadfastly purpose to lead a new life.

Miss W. Yes; the mind is made up—the will is changed. The earnest desire—the full intention of the heart is—what?

Mary. To forsake sin.

Miss W. Yes; to forsake it, *in fact*, for the *present*; to forsake it, *in mind and will*, for the *future*. And thus to forsake sin is, as a holy Bishop says, To

shake hands with it, and leave it behind. Now can you give me any instance, in the New Testament, of a person who seems to have been baptized without true repentance, because without the steadfast purpose to forsake the sin of his life? I mean one baptized by Philip?

'Simon the sorcerer,' said one or two.

Miss W. What did he profess before his Baptism?

Jane. He bewitched the people, giving out that himself was some great one.

Miss W. Yes; and the same powers he wished to preserve afterwards; therefore, what did he do as soon as he saw that the Holy Ghost was given by the laying on of the Apostles' hands?

Agnes. 'He offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. He was still ambitious to be thought 'some great one,' and to exercise superhuman power, (or power above man's power,) and what did St. Peter say to him? Look at Acts, viii. 21-23.

Alice. 'Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God . . . For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.'

Miss W. He was still bound with the guilt of his sin, because he had not gone to Baptism in repentance, with the purpose of forsaking sin. He seems to have gone with his heart and purposes unchanged. But is this what we are to do?

Rose. No; this is not repentance.

Miss W. Surely it is not. In a few words, repentance may be said to be a change of mind and purpose, a turning from evil to good. Let us look at those to whom St. Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, and see how this is shown to us. To whom was the sermon addressed?

Anna. Jews and strangers.

Miss W. And had the Jews received Christ wh upon earth?

Several. No, rejected Him.

Miss W. Yes, with a few exceptions. Look verse 36, what St. Peter says to those very Je whom he was addressing.

Harriet. 'Therefore let all the house of Is know assuredly, that God hath made that sa Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord a Christ.'

Miss W. It may be, that among some of his he ers, were those who a few weeks before had cri 'Crucify Him, crucify Him.' But what effect h the sermon upon them?

Several. 'They were pricked in their heart, a said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, M and brethren, what shall we do?'

Miss W. Were they not satisfied, then, to do : they had done?

Mary. No, they wished to do differently.

Miss W. Did they think of their past acts as th had thought of them before?

Margaret. No; now they were pricked in the hearts when they thought of them.

Miss W. What do you mean by 'pricked in the hearts'?

Several. Sorry.

Miss W. Yes; their feelings and purposes, the were changed. Those acts in which they had glorie they were now sorry for; those things which th had done, they desired—what?

'To do no more,' said Ruth.

Miss W. And those things which they had le undone, they now—?

'Wished to do,' said several.

Miss W. 'Repent,' said St. Peter, and 'be ba tized'; and did they repent?

Rose. Yes; about three thousand souls.

Miss W. They turned, then, from hatred of Christ, to—what?

‘Loving and worshipping Him,’ said Mary.

Miss W. They *had* rejected Him as their King; *now*, to what did they yield themselves?

Several. To be His servants.

Miss W. They *had*, in rejecting Him, been serving the devil, His enemy; *now*, to Whose service were they pledging themselves?

Anna. The service of Christ.

Miss W. In heart and purpose they submitted to Christ, Whom before they had rejected, when (pricked in their hearts) they had asked, What shall we do? And what was their first act of submission?

Emily. Being baptized.

Miss W. Yes; and we find that, afterwards, they had grace to perform their resolutions, their purposes of amendment. What are we told in verse 42?

Bessie. ‘They continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.’

Miss W. St. Paul, too, may be an example. With what purpose did he go to Damascus?

Sarah. To bring Christians bound to Jerusalem.

Miss W. Whom was he persecuting in doing this?

Agnes. Christ.

Miss W. His whole desire was to destroy the Faith of Christ; but how quickly were his desires and purpose changed! What did he answer when Jesus spoke?

Mary. ‘Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?’ (Acts, ix. 6.)

Miss W. To His service he at once resigned himself. His mind and purpose were changed. And how did he spend his time before his Baptism?

Several. In fasting and prayer.

Miss W. Yes, in sorrowing over his past sin. Thus he is an example to us of—what?

Margaret. Repentance.

Miss W. Yes, of the repentance required—of whom?

All. Persons to be baptized.

Miss W. There must be a change of mind and purpose, a yielding of ourselves—to Whose service?

Several. God's.

Miss W. A determination to forsake sin in which we may have lived before, and to be guided by the will of God. How did St. Paul show that this was his determination?

Rose. By asking, 'What wilt *Thou* have me to do?'

Miss W. And what else will there be in repentance?

Emily. Sorrow for past sin.

Miss W. Our Church teaches us, that this is what she means by repentance, in her Service for such as are of riper years. Look first at the rubric, what persons are to be exhorted to do before Baptism?

Anna. 'To prepare themselves with prayers and fasting.'

Miss W. As who did?

Several. St. Paul.

Miss W. And what is fasting a token of?

Several. Sorrow for sin.

Miss W. And in prayer what should we confess?

All. Our sins.

Miss W. And this persons are to be exhorted to do, and are supposed to have done, when they come to Baptism. Now see what further is required from such persons in the address to them in the service.

Alice. 'Wherefore, after this promise made by Christ, ye must also faithfully, for your part, promise . . . that ye will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's Holy Word, and obediently keep His commandments.'

Miss W. In renouncing the devil and his works, what do they forsake?

Ruth. All sin.

Miss W. Yes; they profess that they then turn their backs upon sin, or forsake it. And when they are asked, 'Wilt thou obediently keep God's commandments *all the days of thy life,*' what do they answer?

Harriet. 'I will endeavour so to do, God being my helper.'

Miss W. Thus they express their determination for the time to come, that they will go on forsaking sin; for, in keeping God's commands, what do we forsake?

All. Sin.

Miss W. But is the person taught to say, 'I will do it,' without any doubt?

Emily. No, 'I will *endeavour* so to do.'

'God being my helper,' added Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; why is this, do you think?

'Because, perhaps he may break his resolution,' said Sarah.

Miss W. Because man is weak, and easily led into sin; therefore, he cannot dare to say, 'I will do it,' but humbly says, 'I will try.' And it is this willingness and intention to try, which is a part of the repentance necessary to Baptism. No one, who did not heartily intend to endeavour to do God's will, could expect a blessing in Baptism, could expect to die unto sin, and rise again unto righteousness. And when must a person begin his endeavours?

Several. At once.

Miss W. At the very time he must be endeavouring—nay, more—he must have fought bravely against every sin, during his preparation. And how long must our endeavour last?

Several. All our lives.

Miss W. What did St. Paul begin to do as soon as he was baptized?

Margaret. 'Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.' (Acts, ix. 20.)

Miss W. The purpose to lead a new life had come —when?

Several. Before he was baptized.

Miss W. Yes; and he began to carry out his purpose at once, and continued to do so all his life long. We, too, girls, must try to carry out the vows of our Baptism; daily to forsake sin, by walking in God's commandments. We will now go on to consider the second thing required of persons to be baptized. What is it?

All. Faith.

Miss W. What do you mean by faith?

Several. Belief.

Miss W. What especially are we required to believe?

Alice. 'The promises of God made to us in that Sacrament.'

Miss W. Which Sacrament?

All. Baptism.

Miss W. What is the promise attached by our Lord to Baptism?

Emily. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' (St. Mark, xvi. 16.)

Miss W. And what was promised to St. Paul in Baptism?

Margaret. Forgiveness of sins. 'Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.'

Miss W. Yes; and how is the inward and spiritual grace expressed in the Catechism?

Mary. 'A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.'

Miss W. Yes; forgiveness of sin, and grace to lead a new and everlasting life, if we will, are the bless-

ings God promises. And these, the promises, we are required to—?

‘Believe,’ said one or two.

Miss W. The condition on which we receive them is, that we believe, or have faith in them. Who makes the promises?

Anna. God.

Miss W. Then, in believing them, in Whom do we believe?

‘In God,’ said one or two.

Miss W. Quite so; in Him who makes the promises. Then, if I promise you to give you a dress, and a person were to say to you, ‘You’ll never get the dress,’ what would you answer?

Several. That you had promised.

Miss W. But he might say a promise is nothing; would this make you doubt?

‘No, Ma’am,’ cried several, ‘not if *you’d* promised; because you always keep your word.’

‘If I can,’ said Miss Walton, smiling. ‘Well, then, the reason you would trust in my promise is—why?’

‘Because we trust you,’ said Ruth.

Miss W. Very good. So the only thing which will make us really believe the promises of God made to us in Baptism must be because—what?

‘We believe in God,’ said one or two.

Miss W. Yes; then, believing in His promises is really believing Him. And this you will see still plainer if you think of *what* He promises. What did you say it was just now?

Margaret. Forgiveness of sins, and grace to lead a new life.

Miss W. And Who alone can forgive sins?

All. God.

Miss W. Then, if we believe that our sins are forgiven, Who must forgive them?

All. God.

Miss W. But through Whom alone can He forgive?

Several. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Who came to save His people from—what?

Several. Their sins.

Miss W. It is only through Him that are preached repentance and—what else?

Emily. Remission of sins.

Miss W. Believing, then, that our sins are forgiven, we must believe in—Whom?

Agnes. Jesus Christ, through Whom they are forgiven.

Miss W. And again, by Whose indwelling have we power to lead a new life?

Several. The Holy Spirit's.

Miss W. And Who went away to send the Holy Spirit to us?

Mary. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Then the grace to lead a new life comes through—Whom?

All. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. If, then, we truly believe that this grace shall be ours, it is because we believe in Him Who promises it, and gives it; Who saves us from the power, as well as from the guilt of sin, by the gift and indwelling of—?

'The Holy Spirit,' they replied.

Miss W. Now tell me whether we find that the first teachers of the Church required this faith from persons to be baptized. When the Eunuch asked Philip, 'See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?' what was his answer?

Bessie. 'If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.'

Miss W. Concerning Whom had Philip been teaching him?

Agnes. Jesus.

Miss W. Yes; no doubt proclaiming Him as the Son of God, come to give repentance and remission of sin, and the gift of the Holy Ghost—having died for our sins, and risen again for our justification. Then in Whom was he requiring the Eunuch's belief?

Several. In Jesus.

Miss W. As what?

'A Saviour,' said Mary. 'The Son of God,' said others.

Miss W. You are all right. He was requiring belief in the Son of God, as the Saviour of the world—Who would give to the Eunuch forgiveness and grace. And what did the Eunuch answer?

Emily. 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' (Acts, viii. 35–37.)

Miss W. And what does 'Jesus' mean?

All. A Saviour.

Miss W. And what does 'Christ' mean?

Rose. The Anointed.

Miss W. The Eunuch's few words, then, expressed much, and show us something of what Philip had taught him; as though he had said, 'I believe in the anointed Saviour, Who saves from the guilt, from the power, and from the punishment of sin; and that this Saviour is the Son of God, all powerful to give us grace unto righteousness.' And, having thus expressed his belief, what did Philip do for him?

All. Baptized him.

Miss W. Again: remember St. Paul's words to the jailor, at Philippi, when he asked, 'What must I do to be saved?' What was the answer?

Several. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' (Acts, xvi. 30, 31.)

Miss W. And, then, what are we told St. Paul spake unto him?

Anna. 'The word of the Lord.'

Miss W. Yes, the message of forgiveness; he

would explain what was meant by believing on Jesus, the Saviour—Christ the Anointed—the Lord God. And when he had done this, to what did the jailor come?

Ruth. Baptism.

Miss W. Then we see not only was repentance required, but—?

Several. Faith.

Miss W. Yes; faith in Jesus Christ, and His work for man : and His special work was obtaining for man—what?

Rose. Forgiveness of sins.

Miss W. And the Holy Spirit to help man when forgiven. Christ, too, by His own words, which you have already mentioned, taught that Faith was required for Baptism. When He bade His apostles preach, and baptize, what did He add?

Sarah. ‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.’ (St. Mark, xvi. 16.)

Miss W. Thus our Church teaches her children, that God requires of persons to be baptized—what?

Margaret. ‘Repentance, whereby they forsake sin ; and Faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.’

Miss W. When Christ was upon earth, we ever find Him requiring faith of those who came to Him for any blessing. When He was about to raise up Lazarus from the dead, what confession of faith did He require from Martha? (St. John, xi. 25-27.)

Harriet. ‘Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life : he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord : I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which *should* come into the world.’

Miss W. Having received this profession of her faith, our Lord then worked—what miracle?

‘Raising Lazarus from the dead,’ they replied.

Miss W. Yes; but not till Martha, who had sent for Him, professed her belief in His power to do it—though she only looked for it at the last day. He gave her more than she *looked* for, not more than she had *faith* for. Again: look at St. Matt. ix. 27–29. When the blind men cried for mercy, what did Christ ask them?

Margaret. ‘Believe ye that I am able to do this?’

Miss W. And they having answered, ‘Yea, Lord,’ what did He further say and do?

Alice. He ‘touched their eyes, saying, *According to your faith be it unto you.*’ (See also St. Matt. ix. 22; St. Mark, x. 52; St. Luke, xvii. 19.)

Miss W. According to their faith. Now Christ works a miracle for us in Baptism greater than raising Lazarus’s body from the grave, or healing the blind men. But, before doing so, what does He require from us?

Several. To believe that He will do it.

Miss W. Yes; before He raises us up from the death of sin, He requires us to believe that He is able and willing to do it; before He restores our sight, enabling us to see and choose the path of righteousness, He, as it were, asks us—what?

Agnes. ‘Believe ye that I am able to do this?’

Miss W. And we must answer, ‘Yea, Lord,’ that so He may fulfil His promise, and grant us our desires. And does the Church require any outward profession of faith of those who come to Baptism?

Rose. Yes, a profession of belief in the Creed.

Miss W. We say that, by our god-parents, we promised—what?

Ruth. ‘To believe all the articles of the Christian Faith.’

Miss W. And what is one of the articles concerning Baptism?

Margaret. 'I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.'

Miss W. Or, in the words of the Apostles' Creed, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins.' And Who is the third Person in the Blessed Trinity in Whom we are required to believe?

All. The Holy Ghost.

Miss W. Who does—what for us?

Several. 'Sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God.'

Miss W. Yes; enables us to live the life of righteousness to which, in Baptism, we are new-born. And this our faith, must it be only a passing faith, or must it continue, if we would continue in the state of salvation?

Mary. It must continue.

Miss W. How does the Catechism tell us our faith is to make us believe?

Alice. 'Steadfastly'.

Miss W. Very good. And what does 'steadfastly' mean?

'Firmly,' said some.

'Constantly,' said others.

Miss W. Yes; steadfastly we must believe, or with an unshaken faith. For as our work, begun in Baptism, is to continue,—our repentance to lead us to forsake sin,—our faith to grow and increase, so God's grace, first given then, will continue to be poured down upon us according to our needs; and we must believe steadfastly, or constantly, that He will not fail us, in order that we may not fail. Can He break His promise? Look at 2 Cor. i. 20.

Sarah. 'For all the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God.'

Miss W. In Him—that is, in Whom?

Several. Christ. (Ver 19.)

Miss W. 'In Him God's promises are Yea,' that is, *verified*, or made true; and in Him 'Amen,' that is, *confirmed*, or made sure to us. Our faith, then, must be steadfast, because God cannot—?

'Fail us,' said Margaret.

Miss W. Yes, He is true. And it must be steadfast, because He will give increase of grace, day by day, according to what?

Several. Our faith.

Miss W. We should remember, then, whenever we would ask God for any blessing, what was required of us for Baptism. Faith was required *then* for the gift of grace. Faith is required *still* for the increase of grace. Our faith must be—what does the Catechism say?

Several. Steadfast.

Miss W. If we pray, we must pray in faith; if we go to confirmation, we must go in faith; if we eat and drink of Christ's Body and Blood, we must eat and drink in—?

'Faith,' they replied.

Miss W. Now I will read you a few words about our Baptism, and how our faith and repentance must remain with us.

'Baptism is of special use through a Christian's whole life. It is but once administered; but the virtue and efficacy thereof grows not old by time. In all thy fears and doubts look to thy Baptism, and the promises of God then sealed to thee. Lay hold on them by faith, and thou mayest have actual comfort. In thy failings, slips, and revolts, to recover the sooner, look back to thy Baptism. New Baptism shall not need; the covenant and seal of God stands firm, and changeth not.

'Renew thy repentance, renew thy faith in those blessed promises of grace, sealed and secured in Baptism, and then expect all good from God's free mercies in Christ, although thy performances fall very

short; though thou art an unprofitable servant.* I should like you, girls, (continued Miss Walton,) to copy that passage into the books I have given you to write anything in you like.

‘Please, Ma’am, we can do it at evening school next time, can’t we?’ asked Emily.

‘Yes, I should like you to do so; two of you can see to do it at once, and it will not take you long, so that most of you can get it done.’

Miss Walton went on talking to the girls for some time; but we must not repeat the conversation if you want to hear of Emily’s confirmation.

Miss Walton kept her promise, and made arrangements to go with Emily. She, however, could not walk so far, and, therefore, hired a carriage which would take Emily also, and save her fatigue.

‘There would be room for another,’ said Mr. Walton to his sister, as he came into the room after engaging it. ‘Would one of the other maidens like to go with her?’

‘I dare say they would,’ returned Miss Walton. ‘I should like Mary to go, if Mrs. Brooks would spare her; she has never seen a confirmation, and she is now of an age when she ought to think much about it. This would help her, I think.’

‘We’ll go, then, after dinner, and see Mrs. Brooks,’ said Mr. Walton. They accordingly did so, and she kindly gave permission. Mary was delighted, though she did not say much before her mistress. When, however, she opened the door to let Mr. and Miss Walton out, and one of them said to her,

‘You will like to go, won’t you, Mary?’

‘Oh! yes, very much,’ she replied. ‘I never thought of such a thing.’

Mr. Walton paused a moment at the door, and said, ‘Miss Walton fixed upon you, Mary, because you

* Nicholson on the Catechism.

are nearly old enough to be confirmed, and she thought it would help you to think about it, and prepare for it for yourself. Will you try and make a good use of the opportunity?

Mary's eyes dropped, and the ready blush rose to her cheeks, as she replied,

'Yes, Sir.'

'If you do this,' said Miss Walton, 'it will not only be a day of enjoyment for you, but of profit also.'

'Nine o'clock, then, Mary, at our house,' said Mr. Walton; 'don't be later!'

'Oh, no! Sir,' she replied, with a curtsy and smiling face.

Neither Emily nor Mary was late; and Mr. and Miss Walton in front, and the two girls behind in the phaeton, the party drove to Ilsham. Mary had never been in a carriage before, (only on the top of the coach, when she came to Forley,) and her enjoyment was very great, though she did not say much. She showed her pleasure very quietly, and did not, therefore, distract Emily's mind too much from thoughts of what she was about to do.

They reached Ilsham just in time. But as the other candidates were already in their places, Emily was allowed to sit with Miss Walton and Mary, to her great relief, for she had dreaded being separated from all she knew. Miss Walton was glad, too, for she was grieved to see many of the Ilsham children talking and smiling, and she knew how much such behaviour would have disturbed Emily, who now sat with her Prayer-Book open, and her eyes fixed upon it. She was looking pale, not from fatigue, but from mingled feelings of awe, and hope, and desire; for Emily realized what she was about to do, and, with humble faith, looked for the blessing of the Holy Ghost, whereby she would be strength-

ened to keep her renewed vows. Mary, too, kept her eyes from wandering when once the service had begun; and yet the scene was so new to her, and so beautiful in her eyes, that it must have cost her no little effort.

Miss Walton heard a low distinct 'I do,' from Emily's lips, and very soon her turn came to approach the Altar. Miss Walton noticed her hands trembling as she laid down her book, and she almost wished she could have walked with Emily to her place, for she feared it would be too much for her; but as this could not be, she watched carefully, to go in a moment if Emily should faint. When, however, Emily rose again from her knees to return to her place, her step was steady, a slight blush had taken the place of the extreme paleness, and Miss Walton no longer feared her fainting. Mary's eyes had also been upon Emily all the time with a look of both interest and affection.

The service was long, but when it came to an end, Mrs. Abbot asked Miss Walton to bring her girls into the Vicarage, and take some lunch before returning home. Had it not been that Mr. Walton particularly wanted to see the Bishop, Miss Walton would have declined, thinking Emily had had enough excitement, and that quiet was better for her than going among a number of servants; but as this was the case, she consented, and the two little girls were taken to the Vicarage kitchen, and Miss Walton saw no more of them until they were ready to start home again. Little passed on the drive, and they set first Mary, and then Emily, down at their homes, as they passed; and as Emily looked up to say 'good evening,' both Mr. and Miss Walton were struck by her thoughtful, peaceful countenance. No sooner, however, had she reached the up-stairs room, than she threw her arms around her mother's neck, and burst into tears.

'My dear Emily,' said her mother, 'what is the matter? has anything wrong happened?'

'No, Mother; but I've been so—so happy. Oh Mother, I can't tell you what it was.'

'I trust it will be a great blessing to you, my dear child,' returned her mother, 'a blessing all your life long.'

'I hope it will,' she replied, earnestly. 'Oh! Mother, I hope I shall not be naughty to you any more. I know I have been often since I was sick, though I thought then I never would be.'

'We are weak in ourselves all our lives long, dear Emily; but I trust God will strengthen you to strive to do right, and to keep the vows of this day.'

'Oh! Mother,' she continued, laying her head on her mother's shoulder, 'I couldn't help thinking—it was just before I went up to the Bishop, Mother—I couldn't help thinking of that night when I received the Holy Communion; I never thought then that I should live to be confirmed; I thought I should die; and I don't know why, but all that passed then came before me, and it seemed so wonderful that I should be in Church after all, waiting to be confirmed, and that, perhaps, I had a long life to live yet. And I thought, Mother, for a minute, if I shouldn't live a good life, it would have been better to die then. It put me all into a tremble, and then I had to go up to the Bishop; and I did think, as I went along, that I would try and live a good life; and I thought God would help me then, and I didn't tremble any more after the Bishop's blessing. Oh! Mother, I was so happy.'

Mrs. Freeward's eyes filled with tears as she listened to her child, and pressed her to her heart. When Emily stopped speaking, she said,

'I trust God has spared your life for a good purpose, my dear child; and He will surely hold you up from falling if you put your whole trust in Him.'

'I thought so, Mother, afterwards. I don't think

He would have let me be confirmed, if He would help me always.'

Mrs. Freeward, after a few more minutes' conversation, left Emily alone, saying that she would care that she should not be disturbed for a short

Miss Walton had mentioned to Mr. Walton her trembling. When he afterwards heard from her that she had felt the cause, and how much Emily had felt the vice, he took an opportunity, in a day or two, of speaking to her, and warning her of the danger of becoming careless when her excited feelings had passed. He knew this would be the great danger to Emily's disposition, with strong, easily roused feelings; and, faithful to his trust, he warned her of danger. But as time went on, he felt more and more satisfied about her, for he saw that she was trying to carry her feelings out into action, and then he felt that those feelings would be a blessing rather than an evil.

I suppose I must not conclude without telling readers that Emily completed her self-imposed task. The shirt was finished without a sigh, and much pleased she was the following Sunday, when it had been washed and ironed by her own hands, to see her father wear it, and to hear him thank his 'little maid' for her handy-work.

LESSON LXXI.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

'WHAT have we seen that God requires of persons to be baptized?' asked Miss Walton.

All. Repentance and faith.

Miss W. 'Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?'

Alice. 'Because they promise them both by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.'

Miss W. We say infants cannot perform 'them'; what do we mean by 'them?'

'What God requires,' said some.

'Repentance and faith,' said others.

Miss W. Yes; infants (while infants) cannot perform repentance and faith. Why then are they baptized?

Margaret. 'Because they promise them both by their sureties.'

Miss W. These promises are made by whom in Church?

All. The sponsors.

Miss W. But in the private Baptism of children, are there any promises actually made?

Sarah. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. The promises are not expressly made, but they are understood, or supposed; and if a child

lives, he is expected to make them openly in church—how?

Rose. By his sponsors.

Miss W. Yes; just the same as if he had at first been baptized in church; but if the child is never able to do this, we believe that God gives the blessing, because the child has fulfilled His command, and is baptized with water—in what Name?

All. 'The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Yes, in the name of the Holy Trinity; and we believe that a child so baptized would, if he grew up, even without any promises being expressed for him by sponsors, still be bound by the promises understood and implied by the Church in permitting him to be baptized. For into what do we enter with God by Baptism?

Agnes. Covenant.

Miss W. And how many parts are there in a covenant?

Sarah. Two parts.

Miss W. What are they?

Rose. God's part, and our part.

Miss W. What is our part of the covenant of Baptism?

Mary. Repentance and faith.

Miss W. Just so. It is then impossible that we can claim God's part of the covenant, forgiveness and new-birth, without being *bound* to our part, repentance and faith, whether the promise which binds us is expressed, or only understood. You may turn to the Service for the private Baptism of infants, and see what is said about the sufficiency of private Baptism; after the first prayer, *Ruth*.

Ruth. 'Let them not doubt but that the child so baptized is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again.'

Miss W. Yes; we believe that God, who loves

little children, will accept them when brought to Him, even though, on account of sickness, or some other urgent cause, no promises are *expressed*; and if the little one dies, it is because God has fitted him for Heaven in a few short days, or even hours. But if the child lives, what has the Church bid us do?

'Take him to church to be christened,' said several.

'Not to be christened,' said Miss Walton; 'he has already been made Christ's; but to be received publicly into the congregation, and to make his promises of repentance and faith. Now look again at the rubric after the questions appointed to be asked.'

Emily. 'If the minister shall find by the answers . . . that all things were done as they ought to be: then *shall not he christen the child again*, but shall receive him as one of the flock of true Christian people.'

Miss W. I want you to understand this, and not to have a mistaken feeling about it, as I fear so many have. God gives the blessing of forgiveness of sins, and makes an infant a child of grace—when?

Rose. When he is baptized 'in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Miss W. Just so; and sometimes it is needful to baptize in private; but if the child lives, as a matter of order, it is appointed that he shall be brought to church, not to receive the great baptismal blessings, which he has received already, but—why?

Anna. To be received into the congregation.

Miss W. Yes; and something else. To promise openly repentance and faith—how?

Several. By his sureties.

Miss W. Very good. And this should never be neglected when a child lives after being privately baptized; though we believe if the child dies, he is, of God's mercy, undoubtedly saved, because he has

received remission of sins, and been made one with Christ, his Saviour. And now let us see what grounds we have for believing that God will thus receive and bless children. Can you give me any reason?

‘Because Jesus said, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God,”’ said Agnes. (St. Mark, x. 14.)

Miss W. Very good, Agnes; if we had no other ground of confidence, this would be enough; for, does God change?

Margaret. No; with Him is ‘no variableness, neither shadow of turning.’ (St. James, i. 17.)

Miss W. Then, if He loved and received children, and blessed them when on earth, what may we believe?

Several. That He will do the same now that He is in Heaven.

Miss W. Yes, indeed. And what reason did Christ give for not sending them away?

Mary. ‘Of such is the kingdom of God.’

Miss W. Or, as St. Matthew says, ‘the kingdom of Heaven.’ And what is God’s appointed way for our being made inheritors of this kingdom?

Several. Baptism, wherein we are made inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven.

Miss W. Then, since Christ has said of children, ‘of such is the kingdom of Heaven,’ must *we* shut the entrance of that kingdom to them? Can we think for a moment that He will not receive them?

All. No, Ma’am, for He received them on earth.

Miss W. We must not dare to exclude those of whom He has said—?

‘Of such is the kingdom of God,’ they all continued.

Miss W. Rather we must try to be like them, lest, while they are admitted, we be shut out.

What, therefore, in the Baptismal Service, is said to us after these words have been read?

Jane. 'Doubt ye not, therefore, but earnestly believe, that He will likewise favourably receive this present infant; that He will embrace him with the arms of His mercy; that He will give unto him the blessing of eternal life, and make him partaker of His everlasting kingdom.'

Miss W. But there are other reasons why we believe that God will receive and bless infants in Baptism, and enter into covenant with them. When St. Peter invited all to repent and be baptized, to whom did he say the promise was made? (Acts, ii. 39.)

Bessie. 'The promise is unto you, and to your children.'

Miss W. Not to men and women alone, but to—? 'Children also,' they replied.

Miss W. The promise of what? What did St. Peter just promise to those who should be baptized?

Rose. Remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Miss W. Then what is promised to children as well as to grown-up people?

All. Remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Miss W. Quite so. 'The promise,' St. Peter says, 'is unto you, and to your children.' And how had he just told them the pardon and gift would reach them?

Sarah. Through Baptism.

Miss W. Thus we see that St. Peter invited, not only grown people to Baptism, but—?

'Children,' they all replied.

Miss W. And promised the blessings of Baptism, not to grown people alone, but to—?

'Children also,' they said again.

Miss W. And, therefore, we still bring infants to Baptism—believing what?

Agnes. That God will receive them.

Miss W. Again : whom did our Saviour bid His Apostles baptize for the remission of sins ?

Emily. All nations.

Miss W. And of what is a nation made up ?

Rose. Men, women, and children.

Miss W. Very good. This, then, we believe to have been a command to make disciples of children, as well as grown people, by Baptism. Now, were all nations admitted into the covenant that God made with Abraham ?

‘No, only his seed,’ said Margaret.

Miss W. But now *all* nations were to be put into the same condition as the Jews alone had been in before. And were Jewish *children* admitted into God’s covenant with Abraham ? Who were bid to be circumcised ?

Sarah. Every man-child among them.

Miss W. At what age ?

Several. Eight days old. (Gen. xvii. 10–12.)

Miss W. And, by circumcision, to what were they admitted ?

Agnes. Covenant with God.

Miss W. Yes ; look at Gen. xvii. 11 and 14.

Jane. ‘Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin ; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you and the uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off from his people ; he hath broken My covenant.’

Miss W. Undoubtedly, then, children among the Jews were admitted by circumcision to—what ?

Several. Covenant with God.

Miss W. Yes ; they became God’s children, and were sure of His blessing. Then, if *all* nations were to have the covenant blessings, as the Jews had before, *who must enter into the new covenant with God ?*

Several. Children.

Miss W. Yes ; if it were not so, our children would

be less blessed than the Jewish children. 'But we believe that all the good things, and many more, which were offered to the Jewish people, God now offers to all nations; and that the promise is unto us, and to our children; and, therefore, we believe that God will favourably receive infants, and give them His blessing in—what?

All. Baptism.

Miss W. Just as He received Jewish children into covenant with Him—how?

All. By circumcision.

Miss W. We find children among the Jews were always looked upon as in covenant with God. Turn to Deut. xxix. (The girls did so, and Miss Walton continued,) Moses had been rehearsing all that God had done for them; and now look what he says from verse 10 to 13.

Bessie. 'Ye stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God . . . your little ones, your wives . . . that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into His oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: that He may establish thee to-day for a people unto Himself; and that He may be unto thee a God, as He hath said unto thee, and as He hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.'

Miss W. Who assembled with the men and their wives?

Several. The children.

Miss W. Yes; and with them God thus renewed His covenant; and now look at the last verse.

Jane. 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.'

Miss W. Thus he taught that the covenant which God had revealed belonged to them and to their children. And again, when Jehoshaphat, fearing God's

anger, proclaimed a fast, and the people were gathered together to ask help of God, who came among them: (2 Chron. xx. 13.)

Ruth. 'And all Judah stood before the Lord, *with their little ones*, their wives, and their *children*.'

Miss W. Surely, then, if God looked favourably upon the little ones and the children brought before Him among the Jews, we need not doubt but that He likewise looks favourably on little ones brought to Him—how?

Several. In Baptism. (See also Joel, ii. 16.)

Miss W. Do we read in the Bible of the Apostles' actually baptizing children?

'I don't mind that we do,' said Rose, half to herself.

'No,' said Miss Walton; 'I don't think we do; but we read of households being baptized; and generally a household consists of children, as well as of grown-up people. Look at 1 Cor. i. 16.'

Sarah. 'I baptized also the household of Stephanas.'

Miss W. And who, besides the jailor of Philippi, were baptized?

Several. 'He and all his.' (Acts, xvi. 33.)

Miss W. Most likely servants and children. But supposing a person tried to argue away all proofs from Scripture that infants ought to be baptized, there is still something for a Christian parent to answer. Whose authority have such people to forbid Christian parents, bringing their children to Christ? Can they show that Christ has ever forbidden them?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Certainly not. Every Christian parent, then, may answer objections in this way: 'Until you can show me that Christ has *forbidden* me to have my children baptized, I shall bring them to Him, that He may bless them. You cannot forbid them, for He expressly tells you not to do so; and He, Who

alone has power to forbid, has not forbidden them, therefore I bring them.' Where has Christ told us not to forbid them?

All. 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.' (St. Mark, x. 14.)

Miss W. Believing, then, that God graciously receives children brought to Him, what has the Church bid us do for infants?

Margaret. Bring them to Christ in Baptism.

Miss W. And since they cannot actually, at the time, have repentance and faith, which God requires of persons capable of them, what has she appointed to be done?

Sarah. That they shall promise them both by their sureties.

Miss W. They are not able to make the promise with their own mouth, so others speak for them. Who promise?

Several. The children.

Miss W. Yes; but they do it—how?

'By their god-parents,' replied the girls.

Miss W. In worldly matters this plan is adopted. When a father dies, leaving property, or an estate, to his son, if that son is only a child, do you know what is done?

'No, Ma'am,' said some of the girls; while Rose said, 'Please, Ma'am, is not somebody appointed by the father to take care of him?'

'Yes,' said Miss Walton; 'somebody is appointed to be his guardian, and to manage his money and his estate for him. The guardian acts in the child's name until the child is old enough to act for himself. So what do sponsors do?'

Mary. They speak in the child's name.

Miss W. But what is the child expected to do when he comes of age?

Margaret. To renew the promises.

Miss W. We have seen already how the vows of

Baptism are promises of repentance and faith. Which part of the vow promises repentance?

'To renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh,' said several.

Miss W. And something more?

Mary. 'To keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of my life.'

Miss W. Very good; and in which part do we promise faith?

Anna. When we promise to believe all the articles of the Christian Faith.

Miss W. And who speak the promises for infants?

All. Their god-parents.

Miss W. Are they called god-parents in this answer?

Several. No; sureties.

Miss W. And why do you think they are called sureties? Can they make it *sure* that the child will grow up in repentance and faith?

'Yes,' replied some who were not thinking. 'No,' replied others; 'a child may break the promises.'

Miss W. No, of course they cannot make it quite sure. A person may break his *own* promise, may he not?

All. Yes, Ma'am.

Miss W. Then even a person's own promise would not be quite secure; but god-parents are called sureties, because they give what security man can give. Of what do they give security?

Rose. That the child shall grow up in repentance and faith.

Miss W. Yes; they give it by speaking for the child, and also because, afterwards, what is it the part and duty of god-parents to do? What does our Service say?

Bessie. 'To see that this infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow,

promise, and profession, he hath here made by you.'

Miss W. Then, if a child is taught this, is he not more likely to keep the promises than if he knew nothing about them?

Several. Yes, Ma'am; he couldn't keep them if he knew nothing about them.

Miss W. Then, as there is some one whose duty it is to remind every baptized child of his promises, it secures (as far, I say, as man can secure it) that the promises shall be kept; therefore, those who undertake this duty are called—?

'Sureties,' said Emily.

Miss W. But what further is the part and duty of sureties, in order to secure the child's growing up in repentance and faith? That the child may know these things the better, what are the god-parents to call upon him to do?

Several. 'To hear sermons,' and to 'learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments . . . and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health.'

Miss W. Yes, and if a god-parent teaches a child all this, it is the best means of securing that the child shall *do* it. But there is one more thing of which a surety is to take care—what is it?

Jane. That the child shall be brought to the Bishop, to be confirmed by him.

Miss W. Yes. Then what does the child do?

Anna. Renews his vows.

Miss W. True. In his own person he promises, instead of by the mouth of his sureties. But whose duty is it to *see* that the child does this?

Bessie. The god-parents'.

Miss W. Yes, we see, then, that god-parents have a solemn duty to perform, that (as far as in them lies) they may secure to the Church a life of repentance and faith in her child. The Church, as it were, com-

mits children to the keeping of their god-parents, that so they may be led to a life of 'repentance, whereby'—?

'They forsake sin,' said one or two.

Miss W. Yes; and to 'faith'—?

'Whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament,' continued Margaret.

Miss W. Then god-parents have solemn duties to perform. The Church looks to them to see that children are brought up to lead—what sort of a life?

Several. A godly and a Christian life.

Miss W. And by coming forward to promise in the name of a child, we undertake these duties. We undertake to do our best for the child, and the Church trusts us, and feels secure of the welfare of the child left in our hands. When a child is sent to school, to whose care is it committed?

Anna. To the mistress's.

Miss W. So, when we stand for a child in Baptism, he is committed to our care, to see that he is well brought up, and we ought to be very careful not to betray our trust. Now I know, girls, that several of you have stood godmothers for children. I want you to consider well what you've undertaken. Did you make any vow yourself?

Sarah. No, Ma'am; the child vows.

Miss W. But have you not undertaken duties for the child?

Several. Yes, Ma'am.

Miss W. What have you undertaken? First, to be sure that they are taught—what?

Margaret. The promises they have made.

Miss W. Yes; then that they may be instructed more particularly about them, that they may learn to act upon them; and this you do chiefly by seeing that they are taught—what?

Emily. The Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten

Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health.

Miss W. And, lastly, you are to give up your trust when they come of age by bringing them to—?

'The Bishop to be confirmed,' replied three or four.

Miss W. Yes; these are your duties as god-parents, or sureties; and you ought carefully to fulfil them. For Whom are you working in thus acting for children?

Agnes. For God.

Miss W. Then to Whom will you have to answer if you wilfully neglect your duties?

Several. To God.

Miss W. This is a very solemn thought, that perhaps God may require at our hands our brother's life—that if, after undertaking to remind children of these promises, and to lead them, as far as we are able, to fulfil them, we forget all about it, and they grow up ignorant and untaught, and lose their salvation, the fault may be ours. Yet, girls, I would not wish to frighten you from undertaking the duties of god-parents. You ought not to be afraid; rather determine to do your best, and only stand for those children with whom, in after life, you are most likely to be thrown. And supposing you do your best, and a child refuses to listen to instruction, and turns from the way of holiness, is the god-parent then answerable?

Margaret. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No; for it is not in the power of god-parents to force a child to do right. They can but put the right before him, and if he will turn away, the fault will be his own. Again, if sureties see that the parents, or others, are teaching the child all that they require to be taught, need they then interfere?

The girls did not answer, and Miss Walton asked,

‘Does the clergyman say *you* are to teach this child,’ &c. ?

Sarah. No, but to see that it is taught.

Miss W. Very well ; then if god-parents see that a child is virtuously brought up, there is no need to interfere. They are not then *called upon* to instruct the child themselves, unless they like to do it. And there is another thing I would say ; supposing, in God’s providence, a person is entirely removed from his god-child, so as to be utterly unable to do anything active for the child, should he then make himself unhappy about it ?

‘I suppose not,’ said Rose, ‘if he cannot help it.’

Miss W. No, I think not ; it is true he undertook the duty ; but if, in God’s providence, he is prevented from performing it, he may believe that God can work without him. We cannot foresee what our future life may be, and so we can only act for the present, not the future. But is there nothing that such a person *can* do ?

Mary. Yes ; he can pray for the child.

Miss W. Quite right. And this he ought to do ; and all god-parents ought to do the same for their god-children. Whether near, or far off, whether instructing them ourselves, or seeing that others instruct them, or if we are even unable to do either of these, we can still pray for them, and God can work with or without us, as He sees best. But is what I have said any encouragement to neglect the duty if we can perform it ?

Several. No, Ma’am.

Miss W. We must neither make false excuses for neglecting our trust when given, nor should we fear to undertake a trust when called upon to do it. We should undertake it heartily and humbly ; and let us but do our best, even if that best be very small,

and our work will not be thrown away; it will either benefit the child or ourselves; for, in ministering to Christ's little ones, to Whom are we ministering?

Several. Christ Himself.

Miss W. Then, in refusing to do what we can for them, we are refusing to do it for—?

Several. Christ Himself.

Miss W. And what was done to those who neglected to minister to Him?

Ruth. They were sent away from God into everlasting punishment. (See St. Matt. xxv. 31, &c.)

Miss W. Let us, then, girls, willingly, when it is in our power, minister to Christ in His little ones; and having undertaken the trust, we must strive with His help to fulfil it; but if we can do nothing else for our god-children, we can pray for them; and God, if He see fit, can save them without us.

I intended to have said much more to you on this answer, but I see there is not time, since you have begged for more of 'The Elder Sister.' So we must go on with this answer again next Sunday, if all be well.

'Then shall I get the book, Ma'am?' asked Rose.

'Yes, Rose,' returned Miss Walton; 'or Margaret, I think, can reach it better than you.'

Margaret was up in a moment, and reaching the book, handed it to Miss Walton.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*continued.*)

BUT where, it may be asked, were those whose especial duty it was to see that Helen was brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him? What had become of her god-parents? They who were to be security to the Church for Helen? One, who surely would have fulfilled her duty, at whose knee Helen had first lisped her infant prayers, by whose kind voice she had been taught the first words of her

Catechism—her Aunt Jane—was now no more. Another, I fear, had forgotten all she had undertaken for her god-child, and though she lived near, seldom took any notice of her, and her godfather lived many miles off, and had not seen Helen for some years; and so some days went by and no one had spoken to her about the confirmation, except the few words which Katharine had ventured to say; for Mr. Benson had not yet had time to go round to all the cottages, to 'look up' the candidates. A work, indeed, that a clergyman might be spared, by the god-parents doing their duty, and looking after their god-children, instead of leaving it to the clergyman, whose time is always fully occupied. Or, if sponsors are not at hand, surely the parents of children might save their pastor this labour, by sending their children who are of an age for confirmation, to him at once, on notice being given. Many did so after Mr. Benson's notice; and, as we have seen, Charles had given in his name immediately; but Helen, after a couple of days had gone by, had almost forgotten that there was to be a confirmation, except now and then when her sister's words returned, and gave her a momentary uncomfortable feeling. It was not talked of among her companions in the working room; for, though some were candidates, they did not talk about it, and by others it was forgotten. One day, however, about a week after the notice had been given, Helen was surprised by being summoned from her work by her brother James, who handed her a letter directed to her, which had come that morning by the post.

'Who can it be from?' she exclaimed, examining it. 'Who can be writing to me?'

'Open it and see!' cried James; 'you'll never know by looking at the outside.'

But Helen chose to puzzle some time longer, and many foolish thoughts entered into her head. At

length, however, she broke the seal, and looking at the signature, exclaimed,

‘It’s only from my old godfather!’ but although the first feeling was perhaps one of disappointment, she felt rather proud to have a letter addressed to herself, and not a little vexed when her mistress called her, saying, she must come back to her work immediately.

‘Tell Katharine who the letter is from, and run away now,’ said Helen; and putting the letter carefully into her pocket, not wishing her companions to see it, she returned to her work. She guessed what would be the subject of the letter, and, therefore, was not inclined that it should be seen and talked about.

Helen’s godfather kept a shop in a neighbouring town. When he stood for her at the font, he did not think much of the solemn duties he was undertaking, and like too many, when the service was over, thought no more of it; but of late years his thoughts and feelings about it were much changed. He was first roused to a sense of his duties by a sermon the clergyman of the parish had preached to god-parents, and afterward, again, when he was very ill, and was visited by the same clergyman. He rose from his sick bed an altered man; and one of the first things he did was to go over and see after Helen. But this was some years ago. Helen remembered seeing him then, and saying her catechism to him, and that was all she knew of him; she did not know that she was indebted to him for paying her schooling for many years. He had, however, found her well taught, and that her mother did all that could be done for her; and, therefore, he had felt comfortable about her.

Lately, however, he had heard of her mother’s death, and now of the confirmation; and not being able to come over just then to see her, wrote her a kind letter.

It was not, however, until late at night that Helen was able to retire to bed, and read her letter. Weary as she was, the first thing she did was to pull it out, and sit down to read it. It was well, perhaps, that she had not been able to read it at once; for, while sitting over her work after its arrival, with it in her pocket, her thoughts had turned to the confirmation; at first, only thinking that the letter must be about it, and then of herself in connexion with it: this brought her mother to her memory, and many things which she had said to her, unheeded at the time, now came back to her mind; and she knew that her mother would have been grieved indeed if she were not confirmed.

The thought of this somewhat shook her resolution. After such thoughts as these, she was better prepared for her godfather's letter, which she now read.

'My dear Godchild,

'I dare say you will hardly remember me, but I remember you. It was by my mouth you promised, when a little baby, to "renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh." And by my mouth you promised to "believe all the articles of the Christian faith," and "obediently to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of your life;" and I undertook to see that you were taught your vows, and learned those things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; and that when you came of age, you should be brought to the bishop to be confirmed by him. And now I hear that you are, in a few weeks, to have a confirmation in your town, and I think you must now be old enough to renew your vows in your own person. I know, Helen, dear, you have been well taught at school, and by your mother, who, I grieve to hear, has been taken from you; and, perhaps, you have already given in your name to Mr. Benson for confirmation. I hope, indeed, you have; but if not, as your godfather, I must say a few words to you about it, and beg you to do so at once. It is a solemn duty, as well as a great blessing, that you should go to confirmation. It is a blessing, because God, through the

laying on of the Bishop's hands, renews to you the gift of His Holy Spirit, enabling you to meet the trials and temptations of the world upon which you are entering. It is a solemn duty, because God, in giving grace in Baptism, requires repentance and faith, which you were not able to give at your Baptism, but which you *can* give now; and which, in return for His blessings you are *bound* to give. God, as it were, gave you the blessings of Baptism on trust. As you could not repent and believe *then*, He gave you the blessings, on condition that when you were able you should repent and believe, and now you are called upon to fulfil *your* part, to come forward, repenting truly of your past sins, believing all the articles of the Christian Faith, and giving yourself up to walk in God's commandments all your days, whether they are many or few. And if you do this with heartiness, then will God renew and confirm to you the blessing of your Baptism; but if you refuse to do so, God may withdraw from you His favour. If we deny Him, He will deny us; and we deny Him if we refuse to fulfil our side of the covenant of Baptism, and to give up ourselves to Him. But I think I need not speak in this way to you, for you know your duty well, and, I trust, have long tried to do it, and are now looking forward with pleasure and thankfulness to renewing your vows, and being admitted to the full blessings of the Church, the Holy Communion which follows confirmation. I will not, therefore, say more, for I hope to get over to see you shortly. In the mean time, I beg you will try and attend regularly the instruction Mr. Benson gives, and believe, dear Helen, that I feel no slight interest in you, and that, daily, I pray God to defend and bless you, and help you to walk worthy of your high calling. May He be with you now, and assist you in your preparation, and hear your prayers, and pour down upon you a rich blessing in your confirmation.

‘Your affectionate Godfather,

‘HENRY BUSHMAN.’

‘What would he think if he knew I had intended not to go?’ was Helen’s first thought; and the next, ‘What will the girls say if I do go?’ But just as she thought this, there were footsteps at her door, and a gentle, sickly girl, who slept in the same room, and had been kept up to finish some work, entered. She had not been there long, and had only shared Helen’s room *about a week*. The girls had made fun of her *at first, because she would not do many things which*

they did, and never joined in laughing at holy things; but she had taken it all so meekly, that they had given it up; and she was so ready to do any kindnesses for them, that many, who had at first made fun of her, now almost loved her. Helen's impulse was to hide her letter; but Tamar, having caught sight of it, and having noticed Helen wipe away tears several times during her work that afternoon, now came up to her side, and putting her arms round her as she sat, said, 'I am afraid you have had bad news. Is there anything the matter, Helen?'

'No,' she said; 'what made you think so?'

'I thought you had something on your mind this afternoon; and when I came in, and saw a letter, I thought perhaps you'd bad news.'

'No,' said Helen; and then in a moment continued, 'I'll tell *you* what it is, Tamar. It's a letter from my godfather, wanting me to be confirmed.'

'And won't you be?' asked Tamar.

'I don't know. I thought I wouldn't. I thought the girls would laugh at me, but I don't like not going now. I feel as if I ought . . . And . . . and I think mother would have wished it. I don't know why I've thought of her, and things she said, this afternoon.'

'Oh! don't mind what the girls say,' answered Tamar, earnestly; 'even if they do say any thing; but I don't think they will; they've not said anything to me.'

'No; but you are different; they expect it from you; but they would talk if I went,' said Helen.

'Oh, but Helen! if it's right, why should you mind it? Doesn't your godfather say you ought?'

'Yes. It is such a nice letter; you may read it, Tamar;' and she handed the letter to her companion. Tamar read it, and then said,

'It is a nice letter. Oh, Helen! you'll not like staying away after that. Think what he says about denying God.'

'Oh, Tamar!' exclaimed Helen, who had always appeared so careless and indifferent, bursting into tears, 'I feel as if I had done that already. I am not good and steady, like you and Katharine. You don't know how bad I am. I'm not fit to be confirmed.'

'Don't say so, Helen,' replied her kind companion, putting her arms again round her. 'No one is fit in himself, Mr. Benson says, but that God will accept us, for Christ's sake, if we are sorry for what we've done wrong, and intend to try and do better.'

'I do want to try, but I seem as if I couldn't,' said Helen.

'But perhaps you could if you were confirmed,' said Tamar.

The two girls went on talking some time, and read the letter over together; then their little piece of candle burnt out, and the wick fell, and the clock struck one.

'Oh, it is late! and I'm keeping you up,' cried Helen; 'we must go to bed now, or we shall never be up in time in the morning.'

Tamar was not sorry, for her own sake, to stop talking; and the two girls knelt down together in the dark to say their prayers, and were soon after, side by side, asleep in bed.

'Where we must leave them,' said Miss Walton. 'I cannot read more to-day.'

LESSON LXXII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE PERFORMANCE OF OUR VOWS A DAILY WORK.

‘WHERE are you going, Margaret?’ asked Anna, as she saw Margaret trip along the road past her house.

‘I’m going to sit with Aunt Rachel.’

‘Oh! do come and sit with me,’ returned Anna. ‘I’ve been wanting you for this hour past, and have had half a mind to fetch you. All the rest are out.’

‘Oh! but I can’t come,’ said Margaret. ‘Mother promised I should take my work and sit with Aunt Rachel to-day.’

‘Never mind, *you* didn’t promise,’ said Anna, laughing.

‘I know I didn’t with my own mouth, but it’s all the same as if I had when mother promised for me; besides, Aunt isn’t well, and she likes to have me with her.’

‘Well, it’s very tiresome! Ask her if she can’t spare you,’ said Anna.

‘No, I mustn’t do that, I must keep my promise; besides, Aunt would think I didn’t like sitting with her.’

‘I should think you didn’t particularly like it. I’m sure it must be very dull, when she’s in bed, too.’

‘Oh, no, it isn’t, I never think of it. You know how kind Aunt Rachel has always been to me. I like to *do anything* for her.’

‘You are a queer girl, Margaret. It’s no use try-

ing to persuade you to anything,' said Anna, half in joke, and half vexed.

'It's no use trying to persuade me not to go to Aunt Rachel when Mother promised, and she's ill,' said Margaret, laughing, 'so good-bye. I must not stop any longer to talk,' and she ran on; but in a moment returned, saying, 'Why can't you come with me, Anna, and bring your work? I know Aunt would like to see you.'

'I can't leave the house, for nobody is at home, and the Master said he should be round for our work to-day,' said Anna.

'Well, come after he's been,' said Margaret, 'or go for Emily;' and away she ran again, nor stopped till she reached her aunt's door. She opened it gently, and was greeted with a smile by an old woman in bed, and the words,

'There you are, at last; come in, my child, and "do'e" put a bit of wood on the fire, before it goes out.'

Margaret did not look much like a child, but Aunt Rachel had known her since she was a baby, and always called her so, and Margaret did not mind it from her. She hastened to do as her aunt wished, and then tried to make the bed more comfortable, saying,

'How are you this morning?'

'Why, I have had but a poor night, my child, and I was afeared the fire would go out before you came, and that put me into a fidget, but I shall be all right now that you are come.'

Margaret took a little three-legged stool, and placing it by the bed, sat down by her aunt, and was going to spread out her work, when she said,

'Do you think you could spare a minute to read me the Psalms before you begin, my child?'

'Oh, yes,' said Margaret, 'I'll make up for it at dinner-time.'

Ten minutes afterwards, her fingers were stitching away, and her face looked bright and happy, as she listened to, and talked to, her aunt, in that lowly cottage room; and the old woman, too, seemed quite satisfied, and lay still, watching Margaret's every movement with a look of affection. Margaret told her about Anna, and the old woman was quite unhappy for a moment, and even proposed that Margaret should go to Anna, and leave her, now that she had made her comfortable; but this Margaret would not listen to.

'No, indeed I won't,' she said; 'Anna will do very well without me. I'm not going to break my promise to you in that way!'

'You didn't promise me,' said old Rachel.

'But mother did for me, and that's all the same, and so I shall stay with you, Aunt Rachel, unless you'd rather not have me,' she added, laughing.

'God bless you, my child! I'd always have you, with my own good will,' said the old woman, as she fondly stroked her head, 'only I thought poor Anna would not like it.'

'Well, Aunt, I invited her to come here when the Master had been for her gloves. I daresay she'll come, and then you'll have two to take care of you.'

Almost the whole of that day Margaret sat on that same little seat, sometimes silent, when her aunt was tired or asleep, sometimes talking to her, but always without even a murmuring thought. Anna did not come to her, but after sitting alone some time, fetched Sarah to work with her instead. Margaret had one great pleasure that day—a visit from Mr. Walton to her aunt, when she sat by, and heard him read and talk to her.

We will now join Margaret and the rest of them at their Sunday lesson. The second part of the Catechism was repeated, and Miss Walton asked,

'What do children coming to Baptism promise by their god-parents?'

Several. Repentance and faith.

Miss W. And after this promise has been made, have they anything more to do with it?

Sarah. Yes, 'Which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.'

Miss W. What, then, have they to do?

All. To perform the promise.

Miss W. Yes; this is the work to which they are bound. Do you in any other part of the Catechism allow this obligation? (*Miss Walton* receiving no answer, continued,) After repeating the vows of your Baptism, what question is asked you?

Several. 'Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and do, as they have promised for thee?'

Miss W. And what do you answer?

All. 'Yes, verily, and by God's help so I will.'

Miss W. What do you mean by 'Yes, verily'? Supposing you fill up the sentence, 'Yes, verily,' I am—what?

Ruth. I am bound.

Miss W. Just so. You confess yourselves bound by the promises made for you; that is, as I said, you acknowledge the—?

Ruth. Obligation.

Miss W. Then what do you acknowledge yourselves bound to perform?

Rose. The vows of our Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, the vow to believe, and to do—or of repentance and faith. For what is the end of repentance?

'Amendment,' said one or two.

'Obedience,' said others.

Miss W. A Sunday or two ago, you told me how the forsaking of sin must be carried on—how long?

Margaret. Through our whole lives.

Miss W. Yes, because it takes us our whole lives

to renounce and overcome those sins which, by repentance, we are to—what?

‘Forsake,’ said Mary.

Miss W. Then can the vows of our Baptism be fulfilled all at once?

Agnes. No; it takes us all our lives.

Miss W. And when must we begin?

‘When we are of age,’ said some.

‘When we are confirmed,’ said others.

‘We *renew* our promises at confirmation,’ said Miss Walton, ‘but must we put off keeping them until then?’

‘No,’ said Rose, ‘we must always try to keep them.’

Miss W. When do you think we come of age to perform them? When quite a little child is bid to do anything, should she not do it?

‘Yes, Mother always makes our Lizzy do as she is bid,’ said Agnes.

Miss W. And does not Lizzy know that she must do it?

‘Yes, Ma’am, quite well. Mother never hardly speaks twice.’

Miss W. And if she did not do it, what would she know herself to be?

‘A naughty child,’ said one or two.

Miss W. Then what is even little Lizzy of age to begin to do?

‘To keep her promise,’ said Agnes and others.

Miss W. Yes, as soon as ever a child begins to know right from wrong—that she may do one thing, and not another—she is old enough to be led to begin to perform—what?

Several. The promises of Baptism.

Miss W. Before a child is old enough to understand about them, she is old enough to be led to keep them. Then we should begin to perform our promises—when?

everal. When quite little children.

fiss W. And the earlier we begin, the better and
as it is for us. And as a child grows up, cannot
be taught about her promises?

ose. Yes, Ma'am; our little Emma is beginning
earn the Catechism.

fiss W. And very soon she will begin to under-
d it, and to know, when she is inclined to do
ng, that—who is tempting her?

ll. The devil.

fiss W. And if she tries to do right, whom is she
sting or renouncing?

anna. The devil.

fiss W. Then what promise is she performing?

everal. The promise of her Baptism.

fiss W. And if her mother bids her do some-
g she does not like, and she does it cheerfully, in
ose commandments is she walking?

arah. In God's.

fiss W. Surely. I have often watched a little
l's obedience, and gentleness, and struggle to
come temper, and to bear with companions, and
ng forgiveness after a quarrel, or even after ill-
tment, and I have thought to myself, That little
is truly performing the vows of her Baptism,
gh she knows it not. Often we may see, before
ild is able to understand her vows, that she is
ainly keeping them; and by Whose help?

fargaret. God's.

fiss W. Yes, His Holy Spirit dwelling in the
d of grace. Surely, when we remember this, we
ht to look with respect and love on the good
ions of a little child, and give glory to God Who
s manifests His love and power. But if a little
ld thus early should begin her work, who should
p her?

'Her parents,' said some.

'Those above her,' said others.

Miss W. All who have anything to do with a child, should give all the help possible, by correcting what is wrong, and leading to what is right, and setting a good example. But if a child sees an elder sister pettish with her, what will she learn?

Ruth. To be pettish too.

Miss W. And if an elder sister allows her younger brothers or sisters to get into a passion, and have all they cry for, what is she *teaching* them, I may almost say?

Emily. To indulge anger.

Miss W. Yes, when, by wise correction and firmness, she might help them to resist it. Almost all of you sometimes have the care of children, and none of you are too young to understand how you may help or hinder them in performing their Baptismal vow by your example and manner of dealing with them, and *that* before the children are old enough to understand about it themselves. For example, I saw a little girl the other day taking care of a child about eighteen months old. The little fellow wanted an apple, and she refused it three or four times, but did not put it out of sight, or divert the child; and, at last he snatched it, and ran away. She was then angry, struck the child, and took it away; but when he set up a loud cry, and would not stop, she gave it to him. Now, I wonder what any of you would have done?

‘Oh, Ma’am!’ said Emily, ‘she ought to have put it out of sight when she refused, and talked to him about something else.’

Miss W. That was what she might have done at first; but, after he took it—?

Some said, ‘Let him have it;’ but Margaret said, ‘No, she “didn’t ought” to do that when she had refused it; she might have taken it quietly.’

Miss W. Just so; firmly and quietly she ought to have taken it; but, instead of that, she set the child

an example of passion, which he was not slow to follow, taught him wilfulness, by giving it to him at last; and disobedience, for she had bid him not touch it several times, and told him it would make him ill to eat it. Was she training him to keep his Baptismal vow?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. But how does Solomon bid us train children?

Rose. 'Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' (Prov. xxii. 6.)

Miss W. Another way in which I have been grieved to see a child led amiss is, by laughing at him for a thing for which, a few years after, he will be punished; for striking an elder, for instance, or stamping with anger. Should a child *go on* in such ways as these?

'No, Ma'am,' they replied.

Miss W. Then he should not be trained up in them; he should not be allowed to begin them. Now the youngest among you, Harriet, Agnes, or Ruth, may help to train younger brothers or sisters in the way they should go, if you will try, by firmness and gentleness, and example; and those who are old enough to have judgment and authority, by punishing. Look what Solomon says again, chap. xiii. 24.

Bessie. 'He that spareth his rod, hateth his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes.'

Miss W. It is far kinder to punish a child than to let him get the habit of doing wrong, of breaking the vows of his Baptism. Rather by kindness and correction lead him betimes in the right way, than by indulgence permit him to sin. Parents, and elder sisters, and nurses, are perhaps more answerable for the faults of very little children than they are themselves; but as soon as ever any of you were old

enough to understand your duty, what were you bound to do?

Margaret. To try and do it.

Miss W. And if you know what is wrong, and yet do it, who is to blame?

Several. Ourselves.

Miss W. Therefore, what does the Catechism teach us of the promises made by our god-parents?

Sarah. That when we come to age, we are bound to perform them.

Miss W. But when we say bound, does it mean we can't help performing them, that we have no choice left?

Mary. No; we can break them by doing wrong.

Miss W. Yes; a child may choose to do the thing he knows to be wrong; what is he then breaking?

Emily. The promises of his Baptism.

Miss W. Yes. Because whom is he serving?

Jane. The devil.

Miss W. And Whom is he disobeying?

Bessie. God.

Miss W. What do we mean, then, by saying we are bound to keep our promises?

Rose. That we ought to keep them.

Miss W. Yes. We ought to live in repentance and faith for two reasons; in order to keep the promises of our Baptism, and in order to show our gratitude to God for the blessings then bestowed upon us. When you acknowledge in the former part of the Catechism, 'Yes, verily, I am bound to believe and do as my god-parents promised,' how do you go on?

Sarah. 'I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that He hath called me to this state of salvation.'

Miss W. In gratitude, then, for being called to a state of salvation, what are you bound to do?

Several. To keep the promises.

Miss W. God has done much for you, and, by the

law of love and gratitude, you are bound to honour and obey Him as you promised. By nature, what do you learn that you were?

Anna. A child of wrath.

Miss W. But God, in love and mercy, makes you—? 'A child of grace,' they replied.

Miss W. And heir of what?

Several. The kingdom of heaven.

Miss W. And is not this a good and blessed change for you?

All. Yes, Ma'am.

Miss W. Turn to Deut. iv. and see how Moses impressed upon the Israelites obedience, because of all God had done for them. Verses 32–34.

Harriet. 'Ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?'

Miss W. And these things, he says, God did, that He might prove Himself to be God indeed. And another reason is given; look at verse 37.

Ruth. 'Because He loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in His sight, with His mighty power, out of Egypt.'

Miss W. And now see verse 40, to what He teaches them all this mercy bound them?

Sarah. 'Thou shalt keep, therefore, His statutes, and His commandments, which I command thee this day.'

Miss W. Now what has God chosen us out of?

Rose. The world.

Miss W. And made us—what sort of people?

Mary. The elect people of God.

Miss W. How has He done this?

Several. By our Baptism.

Miss W. Through Whom do these blessings come

Anna. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. And why did God give Jesus Christ for us

Agnes. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (St. John, iii. 16.)

Miss W. Then God has dealt with us as with His people of old. He has delivered us from the power of this evil world, from the hand of the cruel master. Who is he?

All. The devil.

Miss W. He has taken us to be His chosen people, and He has done all this because He loved us what, therefore, in all gratitude, should we do?

Several. 'Keep His statutes and His commands.'

Miss W. And so perform—what?

Margaret. The promises of our Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, the promises made in our name when all these benefits were made over to us. We must live, then, from our earliest years in repentance whereby we forsake sin, and faith—why?

Rose. Because we have promised them both by our sureties.

Miss W. Yes; and why else?

Several. To show our love and gratitude to God.

Miss W. You may turn again to Deuteronomy x. 12-16, and see how the exhortation to the Jews belongs to us also.

Emily. 'And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and *He chose* their seed after them, *even you, above all people, as it is this day.* Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.'

Miss W. This is an exhortation we should each take to ourselves. We are each bound, in gratitude and love, (because God hath chosen us to be His children, and given us many blessings,) to keep His commandments, and to serve Him—to live in repentance, whereby we forsake sin, and faith, whereby we steadfastly believe the promises of God made to us in our Baptism. And are any of you not yet of age to do this?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No, truly. You are all of age to perform your promises, to be sorry when you do wrong, and to try to do right. But when the Church teaches you to say you are bound to perform the promises of your Baptism—when?

Several. When we come to age.

Miss W. Yes, she would teach you to look forward to taking the vows in your own persons. When is this done?

All. At confirmation.

Miss W. When you are thought to be old enough to weigh well what you are doing,—to understand the nature of your vows, you are required to confirm them—how?

Margaret. With our own mouths.

Miss W. Yes, publicly. It is not that you are only to begin to perform them then: that you should have been doing since—when?

Several. We were old enough to know right and wrong.

Miss W. But that you should confirm your promise, after, as it were, having tried your powers. *He is most fitted to renew and confirm the vows of Baptism, who has most earnestly tried to perform them from infancy.* Do you remember how Saul armed David when he was about to go to battle with Goliath?

Rose. Yes, with his armour, and a helmet of brass upon his head, and a coat of mail. (See 1 Samuel, xvii. 38—47.)

Miss W. But did David go to battle in these?

Agnes. No, for he had not proved them.

Miss W. But what had he proved?

Several. The sling and the stone.

Miss W. Yes, and God's power to help him. So, in His strength, and armed with the weapons he had proved, David met his enemy. Now, in somewhat like manner, we should, all our life long, be proving our armour, trying our strength against the enemies we have renounced. What enemies had David slain before?

Anna. A lion and a bear.

Miss W. So he was better fitted for the greater struggle. And when are we called upon to be confirmed?

Sarah. As we grow up.

Miss W. Just as our greater struggle with evil begins; but we ought *before* to overcome in the lesser struggles of childhood; we ought to have proved that God is ready to help, and that the battle we are undertaking is not beyond our power. And how can we do this?

Agnes. By trying to perform our promises while we are children.

Miss W. Yes; then, with full confidence, (knowing *the strength* of our enemy, indeed, but knowing also

the strength of our Helper, the sureness of our weapons,) we may go and renew our vows in all humility and confidence, and we shall receive fresh strength, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. When, then, should we be preparing for confirmation?

Several. Every day until we are confirmed.

Miss W. Indeed we should. You may prepare every day, by trying to perform—what?

Several. The promises of our Baptism.

Miss W. Yes, to walk in repentance and faith; that is, in the words of our vow, to ‘renounce’—?

‘The devil and all his works,’ they continued, ‘the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. To believe all the articles of the Christian Faith, and to keep God’s holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our life.’

Miss W. God does indeed sometimes use confirmation as a call to arouse the careless. It is to many the first step in performing the vows of Baptism—the point from which they consciously start their race; but it is grievous to put off so long. It is better to begin *then*, than not at all, or than later; but we should be much happier to begin—when?

Several. In childhood.

Miss W. Yes, indeed; and I think it is seldom a starting point to those who have been *well instructed*, as you have, girls, and yet *wilfully neglect* to act upon what they learn. Certainly, if we *purposely put off* trying to perform our vows till our confirmation, thinking that is time enough, it is very unlikely we shall begin then. We may renew our vows, but most likely it will be a mere form. We must not look upon confirmation as a *sort of charm*, which will set everything right for us, but as a call to work more diligently—a *gracious call from God*, which if we listen to, He will give us renewed gifts

of grace. When you say, then, these words, 'Which promise'—?

'When they come to age,' the girls continued, 'themselves are bound to perform.'

Miss W. Yes; when you say these words, remember that you must, day by day, be trying to perform them, that so you may be better fitted to renew them—when?

All. At our confirmation.

Miss W. Truly; and know better what you are doing. But if, when the call comes, you find you have been before neglecting your vows, what must you then do?

Several. Begin to try and keep them then.

Miss W. Yes, and mourn over your past neglect. Let confirmation be your earnest starting point, if you have not started before. Let it be a fresh starting point, if you are already running your race.

Miss Walton now told the girls to put away their books, and go, for Mr. Walton wanted her. There were sore lamentations among them, as they obeyed her, that she could not go on with the story; but, just as they were leaving, Miss Walton returned into the room, saying,

'I find I am too late now for Mr. Walton; he has gone without me, so I can read to you after all, girls, if you like.'

'Oh, that's right!' nearly all exclaimed, as they hastily drew the forms forward again, and took their seats.

'I'm so glad!' continued little Ruth.

'But perhaps Miss Walton's not,' said Margaret; 'perhaps she wanted to go with Mr. Walton.'

'Oh! no, I didn't mind at all about it,' she replied; 'but you'll lose your story after all, if you don't stop talking, Ruth.'

Ruth looked demure in a moment, and Miss Walton read.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

THE daylight next morning found Helen and Tamar again at their needlework, but Helen was silent and absent in manner. Many thoughts were passing through her mind, many doubts and fears, and when once more bed-time came, and the two girls were alone, she exclaimed,

‘Oh, Tamar! what must I do? I’m sure I’m not fit to be confirmed. I have not tried for a long time to do right—not as I used to do when I was little—and I’m afraid now I shan’t be able, even if I was confirmed; and wouldn’t that be worse than anything?’

‘But why should you be afraid?’ said Tamar. ‘If you wish and try to do right, God will help you.’

‘Ah! it’s different for you,’ returned Helen. ‘You’ve tried before. It’s all natural to you; but I should have to begin all now.’

Tamar was puzzled what to answer, but at length said, ‘But it won’t make it any easier to put off longer. You’d better begin now than later.’

‘Oh! if Mother was alive,’ said Helen, unable to restrain her tears, ‘she would tell me what to do!’ and then she remembered how much she had grieved her mother the last few years, and this added to her grief, though it humbled her at the same time. Tamar did all she could to comfort and encourage her, and her words had more effect than she thought, and at length Helen consented that Tamar should tell Mr. Benson, the next time she went to him, that Helen would like to come to the examinations. ‘But don’t tell him I shall be confirmed,’ she added. ‘I don’t think I shall dare.’

Poor Helen! it was well that anything should arouse her to thought, but how much uncertainty

and unhappiness was her past careless life now giving her! It was almost an untrodden path which she was now invited to enter, and she was afraid to trust herself along it, and had not learnt to trust Him who is with us to uphold our steps, that they slip not. While Charles, counting the cost, knowing something of the enemies he had to contend with, and of the Friend ever at hand to help him, was trying earnestly and humbly to prepare himself for a fresh start, as it were, and looking for help and strength in that very ordinance to meet the dangers of the way, Helen was tossed with doubts and fears, now wishing to change her life and serve God, now fearing the struggle, and faint-hearted; and so the weeks of preparation passed on.

Katharine was delighted when she heard that her sister was attending the examinations, but as Helen had not mentioned it to her, she did not like to appear to know anything about it, she thought it might only annoy her sister; and Helen, though she longed to speak, and often thought she would, was kept back by false shame, and the remembrance of her scornful words to Katharine when the subject had been mentioned before. Tamar, indeed, and Helen often talked together, sometimes going to, and coming from the examinations. Helen always felt encouraged after such a conversation. Her godfather, too, came over, according to his promise, but he was strange to Helen, and she could not bring herself to say much to him, though she felt to love him very much, and liked to listen to him.

But though nothing directly passed about the confirmation between Katharine and Helen, Katharine felt satisfied, for she saw an evident change in her sister. Her careless manner had gone, and she was more subdued and gentle; and Katharine saw her regular at church, and saw her take her Bible and some books Mr. Benson had lent them to read, and

go with them alone, instead of walking out on Sunday evening; and Katharine prayed for her sister, though she did not again speak.

The last evening, however, before the confirmation day arrived. It was a Sunday evening, and Helen had been for the last time to Mr. Benson, and received her ticket, together with some earnest words of counsel and encouragement. She had walked home alone, (for Charles had had his ticket after morning church,) and during that walk had been trying to nerve herself to speak to Katharine. When she opened the cottage door, she found the whole family present except her father, so she could not speak then.

'Oh! here you are, Helen,' said Katharine; 'won't you go up-stairs and take your things off?'

'Will you come with me?' asked Helen, in a low voice.

'Yes,' returned Katharine, somewhat puzzled by her sister's manner.

'Oh! Katharine,' she exclaimed, 'will you forgive me for the way I spoke to you about the confirmation? I dare not go until I have asked you.'

'Dear Helen, I have nothing to forgive,' said Katharine; 'and I am so happy and glad that you are to be confirmed after all: I hoped you would when you thought about it.'

Helen could not answer, and Katharine allowed her to weep on her shoulder for a few moments undisturbed, and then said, cheerfully,

'You have got your ticket, haven't you, dear?'

'Yes,' she said. 'I hope I'm doing right, but, oh! Katharine, I'm afraid of myself. It is all so new to me, and I fail so very, very often.'

'You must not expect to conquer all at once,' said Katharine kindly.

'If I had only tried before,' said Helen; 'but you

know how careless I have been; how I distressed Mother, and you too, Katharine.'

'Yes, but that time is gone by. You will try and be different now,' said Katharine.

'I will try,' said Helen; 'but Mr. Benson said we ought to have been trying to keep the vows of our Baptism all our lives, and that confirmation comes at this time to confirm us in the right way; but it's only the beginning of the right way for me.'

'But it is a good beginning, dear Helen, and God will strengthen you for your work.'

'Are you ever coming down, girls, for tea?' cried the stern voice of their father.

'Go, Katharine; I'll come as quickly as I can,' said Helen.

Giving her sister one more affectionate kiss, with her heart full of gratitude, Katharine went down. She had to go through a trying hour, for her father had come home in one of his worst tempers, and the more that was done to please him, the less he seemed to be pleased.

Helen soon followed her sister, and her father's fault-finding, about first one thing and then another, tried her newly-formed resolutions severely.

'I should like to know, Helen,' he said, 'what you were doing coming home at such an hour. It is quite disgraceful to be loitering about the street as you do.'

'I had to go for my confirmation ticket, Father,' she replied, the blood mounting into her cheeks, 'and I came straight here after getting it.'

'Very fit you are for a confirmation ticket certainly,' he replied, 'gadding about as you do?'

The proud answer was upon her lips, 'Mr. Benson thought me fit,' but she struggled, and kept it in.

'Helen will not go about as she has done any more,' replied Katharine, as gently as she could.

'You've nothing to do with it, Katharine; I'm talking to Helen, and not you,' he replied.

Katharine's cheeks and Charles's cheeks burned, but they were both silent; while Richard, with a laugh, said,

'I'll believe that when I see it.'

Poor Helen bit her lips, and had not Katharine unobserved laid her hand upon her sister's arm, I am afraid her anger and shame would have got the better; but she again restrained herself, with a great effort, and had to listen to her father's severe fault-finding for some time longer. At length she burst into tears, and got up to leave the room; but this her father would not allow her to do, and she stood still listening, while he declared he should go to Mr. Benson, and tell all about Helen, and put a stop to the confirmation in the end; and he got up and left the house.

It was a relief to all when he did so, though almost a death-blow to Helen, for she thought he was going to fulfil his threat, and she ran up-stairs to give way unrestrained. Katharine thought it kinder not to follow her just at first, Richard went out, James gave a great yawn, and exclaimed, 'A good riddance!' the little ones who had shrunk out of sight came forward, but Charles sat still, with his head upon his hands, burning with repressed indignation.

'What must I do?' he presently exclaimed; 'this must not be. Father shan't go to Mr. Benson. Is the only chance of Helen's doing better to be taken from her?' and he rose hastily, and reached his cap, as if to follow.

'Stop, dear Charles,' said Katharine firmly, with tearful eyes; 'stop, and think what you are doing. You must not, indeed you must not, interfere. He is our father!'

'Yes; but is poor Helen to suffer, and no one do anything for her, Katharine?'

'Better suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing,'

she replied. 'And perhaps Father won't go after all.'

Charles sat down again, and Katharine said, 'You'll promise and not go while I see after poor Helen.'

'Yes,' he said; 'see what she would wish.'

'I'll tell you, Charles, dear,' said Katharine, 'what I think Mother would say. That hard as this is for poor Helen to bear, it may do her good. I am sure she bore it well, and God will not let her lose a blessing. So do *you* be patient too,' and saying this, she went up stairs.

She found her sister still crying, but she was right in judging that this trial would work for good, for, as Katharine put her arm round her sister, almost expecting a burst of indignation, she heard instead, the faint whisper,

'He is quite right, Katie dear, I am not fit to be confirmed. It is only a just punishment.'

'Dear Helen! but I hope this will not be; or if he does go, Mr. Benson will know you wish now to do better, and will not turn you away.'

'Yes, I think he will go, he was so stern, and you know I used to be as bad as he said, and if he tells all to Mr. Benson, oh! he cannot think me fit then. I am so very, very sorry, but it is all my own fault. If I had always done right it would not have been so. He could'n't have said such things of you and Charles.'

'I cannot bear, dear Helen, that you should lose the confirmation, and if you like, Charles says he will go and speak to Mr. Benson, if Father has kept his threat.'

'Will he be so very kind?' said Helen, looking up through her tears, and then added, 'No it will **not** do; I despised the confirmation at first, and now it is to be taken from me. If Father forbids me to **go**, and he said he would tell Mr. Benson I should'n't, **I must not go.**'

Katharine knew not what to answer, but at length said,

‘God can give you a blessing without it, I suppose, and help you to do right, and then another time you will be able to go.’

‘I hope He will, and that I shall be better fitted then. Oh! I will try to be different, Katharine, even if I am not confirmed.’

Katharine now returned to her duties down stairs, having told Charles what had passed between her and Helen. After a moment’s silence, Charles exclaimed,

‘Katie, I am sure Helen is far more fit than I am!’ and before she answered, he took up his cap and went out into the garden. The night was calm, and the sky studded over with bright stars, and the moon was just peeping above the horizon. All spoke of rest from turmoil, of calm repose, and Charles felt the influence of all around him, as he slowly walked up and down buried in thought. Helen had come down stairs, and offered to put the children to bed; and Katharine had gladly consented, thinking occupation was good for her. She was going to sleep at home that night, to be ready for the confirmation next day, when her friend Tamar was to join her.

The morning came, and Helen rose to help her sister. Her father did not speak to her, and she knew not what he had done, but she tried to be attentive to him, while her heart was sinking within her, fearing any moment to hear him say he had been to Mr. Benson. At length, as he left the house, as if half ashamed of himself, he said,

‘Mr. Benson said you were to go to him at nine o’clock this morning, Helen.’

She could not answer, for she felt now that all hope was over. Katharine did not think so, and persuaded Helen to dress herself ready for the confirmation, and then she would be ready if Mr. Benson

let her go. Charles begged to be allowed to accompany his sister, and she, glad of his support, consented. Katharine would have liked to go, but could not leave the house; she feared, even, she should not get to church, but as she gave her sister a parting kiss, she said,

‘Father didn’t forbid you, dear; it depends now on Mr. Benson, and I don’t believe he’ll say you nay.’

The confirmation hour drew near, and Katharine knew not the fate of her sister. She hoped for the best, as Helen did not return. Tamar had come, and gone on to the Vicarage, where all the girls were to meet. And now all were assembled, and Helen had not come, and Tamar stood in sorrow and disappointment. The procession began to form under Mrs. Benson’s direction, and Tamar slipped back and back so as not to be put to walk with any other girl. At that moment she heard footsteps in the passage, the kitchen door opened, and Mr. Benson, followed by Helen, entered.

In another moment, Helen’s hand was in her friend’s, and without a word passing between them, Tamar knew that Helen was going, that the blessing had not been denied her. Katharine, however, knew it not for certain; the baby was not well, and she could not go to church. James, Miriam, and Kezia, were all at school, so there was no one to send. A little before one, however, she saw James running towards home; she stood at the door waiting for him, with scarcely restrained anxiety.

‘Our Helen was there,’ he exclaimed. ‘I said I’d be the first to tell you.’

‘Thank God!’ was her inward ejaculation.

‘They are on their way home,’ he continued. ‘We were all at church, or I should have come and told you sooner. It was so beautiful,’ and as he stopped to take breath, she answered,

‘Thank you for coming forward to tell me, but I’m glad you went to church. Did you see both Charles and Helen go up to the altar?’

‘Yes,’ he said gravely, and in a whisper, ‘I wished I was there myself.’

‘You must try and fit yourself for your turn, James dear,’ she said. ‘Now is your time to prepare.’

‘The Bishop told us so,’ he replied. ‘See, there they are! Doesn’t Helen look nice?’

In a moment or two more Helen was again in her sister’s arms, and a bond of affection had sprung up between them, never to be again broken.

LESSON LXXIII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

CHRIST THE ONLY SACRIFICE FOR SIN.

‘WE finished the answers of the Catechism upon the Sacrament of Baptism last Sunday, girls; what is the other Sacrament?’ asked Miss Walton.

All. The Lord’s Supper.

Miss W. And may it be called a Sacrament equally with Baptism?

Margaret. Yes; they are both alike sacraments.

Miss W. True; for, ‘What meanest thou by this word Sacrament?’

Jane. ‘I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.’

Miss W. And is there an outward and visible sign in the Lord’s Supper?

Sarah. Yes. Bread and wine.

Miss W. And of what are they the sign?

Several. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Yes; ‘which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper.’ And being thus taken, what is the inward and spiritual grace given unto us?

Anna. ‘The strengthening and refreshing of our souls.’

Miss W. And who ordained the outward sign?

Several. Christ Himself.

Miss W. When?

‘Just before His Crucifixion,’ said Rose.

‘When eating the Passover with His disciples,’ added Anna.

Miss W. And He ordained it, not for a bare sign only, but to be a means whereby—what are given unto us?

‘The Body and Blood of Christ,’ said Emily.

‘The strengthening and refreshing of our souls,’ said others?

Miss W. You are all right. It is a means whereby we receive the Body and Blood of Christ, by which our souls are—what?

All. ‘Strengthened and refreshed.’

Miss W. And is it anything more?

Margaret. ‘A pledge to assure us thereof.’

Miss W. Yes, that which God has left with us as a pledge of our union with Christ—a security that our spiritual life shall be nourished and supported according to its need. Thus the Lord’s Supper is called a—?

‘Sacrament,’ they all answered.

Miss W. We will now turn to the Catechism. ‘Why was the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper ordained,’ Alice?

Alice. ‘For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.’

Miss W. Now is the Sacrament of Baptism a remembrance of anything?

Several. No, Ma’am.

Miss W. Then, in this respect, the one Sacrament has a larger significance than the other. The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is not only a means and pledge of grace, but—what else?

Several. A remembrance.

Miss W. Yes, or memorial to us of things past, as well as a pledge of blessings to come. And not only

so, but it is also a remembrance before God. Of how many things is it to remind us?

Rose. Two.

Miss W. What are they?

‘Of the sacrifice of the death of Christ,’ said Emily.

‘And of the benefits which we receive thereby,’ added several.

Miss W. Benefits which we receive—how?

Agnes. By the sacrifice of the death of Christ.

Miss W. And the merits of this one sacrifice we, as it were, place before God—remind Him of it. And what is ordained to be thus a continual remembrance—?

All. The Lord’s Supper.

Miss W. It shows forth Christ’s death, and, therefore, serves for a memorial of it. What are we taught to call Christ’s death in this answer?

Rose. A sacrifice.

Miss W. What do you mean by a sacrifice?

Several. An offering made to God.

Miss W. Yes; and consumed as God shall appoint. Now why is Christ’s death called a sacrifice? What did He then offer up to God?

Mary. Himself.

Miss W. His Body He offered to pain and suffering, His Blood to be—?

‘Shed for us,’ they replied.

Miss W. Sacrifices were offered, either to show forth thanksgiving, or to atone for sin. For which did Christ offer Himself?

Emily. To atone for sin.

Miss W. Could He atone for sin without the shedding of blood?

Rose. No; ‘Without shedding of blood is no remission.’ (Heb. ix. 22.)

Miss W. Therefore He shed His blood. We are not redeemed with corruptible things, St. Peter says, as silver and gold, but—how?

Anna. 'With the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot.' (1 St. Peter, i. 19.)

Miss W. And for whom does the answer in the Catechism teach us the sacrifice was made? Who are benefited by it?

Several. We are.

Miss W. Then the sacrifice was for—?

• 'Us,' they all replied.

Miss W. And why did we need a sacrifice offered up?

Mary. Because of our sins.

Miss W. Against Whom had we sinned?

Ruth. God.

Miss W. Then what were we in His sight?

Several. Sinners.

Miss W. That is true; but what did sin make us? Before Adam sinned, God pronounced him very good; but what did he become after his sin?

Sarah. Guilty.

Miss W. Then in God's sight man became—what?

Several. Guilty.

Miss W. Yes; sin had made man guilty. And can God look upon evil? What does the prophet Habakkuk say? (Hab. i. 13.)

Jane. 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.'

Miss W. Then from Whose favour had sin shut us out?

All. From God's.

Miss W. Yes; sin made man at enmity with God. Look at Rom. viii. 7.

Harriet. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.'

Miss W. And St. James says, 'The friendship of the world is enmity with God.' Chap. iv. 4. And what does St. Paul say we were when Christ reconciled us?

Mary. 'Enemies.' (See Rom. v. 10; Col. i. 21.)
(95)

Miss W. The whole world lay under a curse from—what time?

Margaret. From the time of Adam's sin.

Miss W. What was the curse God pronounced upon Adam?

Alice. 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' (Gen. iii. 17-19.)

Miss W. Being, then, guilty before God, and God being too pure to behold iniquity, what did our guilt make us unfit for?

Mary. The presence of God.

Miss W. And do people dare to ask for favours and blessings from those at enmity with them?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Then what would man's guilt, which put him at enmity with God, make him afraid to do?

Emily. To ask God for anything.

Miss W. Immediately after the fall, we find Adam and Eve thus afraid of God. As you told me a few Sundays ago, what did they do when they heard His voice in the garden?

Ruth. Hid themselves.

Miss W. And when they found that they were naked, did they dare to ask Him for a covering?

Anna. No; they made themselves aprons.

Miss W. They tried to make a covering for their own nakedness, and could not; and they were afraid to show themselves to God and ask Him—why?

Several. Because of their sin.

Miss W. But could they escape from Him when He called them?

Agnes. No; they were obliged to come out.

iss W. Yes; in all their naked guilt they were
 ed to stand before Him, to hear—what?

ose. The curse pronounced.

iss W. And could they say or do anything to
 t (I mean, turn away) this curse?

U. No, Ma'am.

iss W. No; they could not make themselves
 a again, fit for God's presence; they could not
 anything in the place of their obedience to ap-
 e His anger, and so what fell upon them?

gues. His curse.

iss W. And what sentence?

irah. The sentence of death.

iss W. And this helpless condition of Adam
 Eve was the condition of all mankind; all were
 y in God's sight; all, therefore, unfit for His
 ence, unable to turn away the curse by anything
 could offer. What does David say about man
 g unable to deliver his brother?

ose. 'No man may deliver his brother, nor make
 emment unto God for him; for it cost more to
 em their souls; so that he must let that alone
 ver; yea, though he live long, and see not the
 e.' (Ps. xlix. 7-9.)

iss W. No one man could deliver *himself*,
 h less his brother too. Again, look at Micah
 7, where Balak inquires how he should come be-
 fore God.

essie. 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord,
 bow myself before the high God? shall I come
 re Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a
 : old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands
 ams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall
 ve my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of
 body for the sin of my soul?'

iss W. Thus he looked around for something
 rewith to atone for sin, something to wash away
 guilt before he durst come before the most high

God, and could not find anything. For were these things sufficient? Look now at Balaam's answer in the next verse.

Emily. 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' (Verse 8.)

Miss W. Perfect obedience was what God required, and man was unable to give it; and anything he could offer to atone for his failures was, like himself, defiled, and under the curse. What, then, could be done? Some better sacrifice was needed than anything man could offer.

'Christ offered Himself,' said little Agnes.

Miss W. Quite right. 'Lo, I come,' said Christ, for what purpose?

Several. 'To do thy will, O God.'

Miss W. Look at Heb. x. 8-10.

Harriet. 'Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said He, *Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.* He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified *through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*'

Miss W. Yes; Christ came to give that obedience which man had failed to give—to do that will which man had failed to do, and, at the same time, to bear—what?

Mary. The punishment of sin.

Miss W. What was the punishment?

All. Death.

Miss W. And did He die?

All. Yes, on the cross.

Miss W. Thus He became what—for us?

Margaret. A sacrifice.

Miss W. Yes; He took upon Himself the curse

of our guilt. We have before spoken of Him as our Priest for ever, now we see Him as the—?

‘Sacrifice,’ they replied.

Miss W. Yes, as the ‘Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.’ God, in mercy, at once, on man’s fall, provided a sacrifice to atone for his sin, which man could not have provided for himself; for whom did He offer to be bruised in the heel, that Satan’s head might be bruised?

Rose. The seed of the woman. ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.’ (Gen. iii. 15.)

Miss W. Here, then, was promised a Lamb for the sacrifice, to be bruised for man’s sake. He made His soul—what does the prophet Isaiah say?

Rose. ‘An offering for sin.’ (Isa. liii. 10.)

Miss W. What did He bear for us?

Agnes. ‘He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.’ (Verse 4.)

Miss W. And why was He wounded?

Several. ‘He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.’ (Verse 5.)

Miss W. And what does the prophet say was laid upon Him?

Anna. ‘The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.’ (Verse 6.)

Miss W. And when was it that He bore all this?

Emily. In His sufferings and death upon the cross.

Miss W. And thus His death was for us a—?

‘Sacrifice,’ they all replied.

Miss W. Christ offered Himself to be the sacrifice. Look at Eph. v. 2.

Ruth. ‘Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour.’

Miss W. Christ loved us, and when we were enemies, offered Himself, and at length came into this world to accomplish the sacrifice. Look at 1 St. Peter, i. 20. After speaking of Christ as the Lamb of sacrifice, what does he say?

Sarah. 'Who verily was *foreordained* before the foundation of the world, *but was manifest in these last times for you.*'

Miss W. Yes, manifested to accomplish the sacrifice. And this He did—how?

'By dying for us,' said several.

'By shedding His blood for us,' said Margaret.

Miss W. And what was the Altar upon which He suffered?

Several. The cross.

Miss W. And Who was the Priest to make the offering?

Agnes. Himself.

Miss W. And for what was the sacrifice made?

Anna. To atone for our sins.

Miss W. And now can you tell me why Christ was a sufficient sacrifice? Man could offer nothing because of his guilt. Why could our Blessed Saviour offer Himself?

Rose. Because He was without sin.

Miss W. Yes. Look at Heb. ix. 13, 14.

Alice. 'If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit *offered Himself without spot to God*, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?'

Miss W. He then was a sufficient sacrifice, because He was without—?

'Spot of sin,' said one or two.

Miss W. Look again at 2 Cor. v. 21.

Emily. 'He hath made Him to be sin for us Who *knew no sin.*'

Miss W. Yes; He stood, innocent, in the place of sinners, and bore their punishment. But we saw, a little while ago, that no *man* could deliver his brother; how, then, is it that Christ can deliver him?

All. Because He is God also.

Miss W. Yes; and yet, being God, submitted to be obedient to laws made—for whom?

'Man,' said Rose.

Miss W. He subjected Himself to obedience of His own free will; and, therefore, it availed for the saving of man. He was obedient, for whose sake?

'Man's,' they replied again.

Miss W. Look at Heb. v. 8, 9.

Bessie. 'Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered: and *being made perfect*, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.'

Miss W. He is a sufficient sacrifice, then, because He was not man only, but—?

All. God also.

Miss W. His blood is a sufficient price, because it is the blood of a Lamb—?

'Without blemish and without spot,' they continued.

Miss W. We see, then, that no sacrifice could atone for man but—what sacrifice?

Several. The sacrifice of the death of Christ.

Miss W. Christ offered up in death was the only sufficient sacrifice. For what, then, were all the Jewish sacrifices? (The girls did not answer, and *Miss Walton* said,) They were for two purposes. First, as types of Whom?

Several. Christ, the true Sacrifice.

Miss W. Yes; and, secondly, by God's appointment, they purified from ceremonial defilement. What were the two kinds of laws to which the Jews were subject?

Rose. Moral and Ceremonial.

Miss W. And if any Jew broke the ceremonial law, he was to offer a sacrifice, and was purified from his defilement: thus St. Paul speaks in Heb. ix. 13.

Jane. 'The blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh.'

Miss W. But could the blood of animals take away sin—moral guilt?

Margaret. No; 'It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.' (Heb. x. 4.)

Miss W. Such blood, brought under the curse by man's sin, could be of no value. Blood far more precious must be shed ere sin could be taken away. Whose blood?

Mary. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Miss W. Then all the Jewish sacrifices typified this Great Sacrifice, and were completed in it. They were ordained to look forward to it; but have we to look forward?

Agnes. No, backward.

Miss W. And is there anything ordained to help us to look backward?

Several. Yes, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Ordained, you say, for what?

All. 'A continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ.'

Miss W. It is ordained to help us to remember His body broken, His blood poured out—when?

Several. When He died on the cross.

Miss W. And what do we say in the Communion Service (in the Prayer of Consecration) that Christ there made for us?

Margaret. 'Who made there (by His one oblation of Himself, once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.'

Miss W. Yes; there, on the cross, He offered Himself the One sufficient Sacrifice for the sins of the

whole world; and as the Jewish sacrifice looked forward to it, so we are to look back to it, in the Lord's Supper; presenting before God the memory of Christ's sacrifice. How does that same prayer go on? Christ not only offered Himself, but—what else did He do?

Anna. 'Institute, and in His Holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death, until His coming again.'

Miss W. Therefore we receive the bread and wine according to—?

'Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion.'

Miss W. Now how did you say God had appointed to the Jew to look forward to Christ's sacrifice, and typify it?

Rose. Through the sacrifice of animals.

Miss W. And could any have neglected this appointed way without sin?

Emily. No; not when God had bidden them.

Miss W. And what would they have lost by neglecting it?

Several. A blessing.

Miss W. So what has God ordained, by which we must look back to Christ's sacrifice and show it forth?

Jane. The Lord's Supper.

Miss W. And if we neglect it, are we innocent?

Several. No, guilty.

Miss W. And what do we lose?

All. A blessing.

Miss W. God has ordained this memorial for our great and endless comfort, and by neglecting it we lose this comfort, and turn away from the pledges of His love. It is a sad thing, girls, to do this, and an unkind thing. All things are ready; great and unspeakable is the favour we are bid to commemorate, and yet we turn away, as if it were no sin, from the feast, and spend the time, while others are remember-

ing Christ, in amusement of ourselves, and forgetfulness of Him, and of His sufferings and death. It would be a good test of the motives of our staying away, whether or not we spend the time in remembering Christ at home, or whether we spend it in thoughtless forgetfulness of Him. Our motive may be right if we take that time to think of Him, and humble ourselves before Him. It hardly can be if we choose to spend the time in forgetfulness. It shows, then, that we do not wish to remember Him; not that we think ourselves unfit to go, which is too often the idle excuse made.

‘I think now I have asked you questions enough,’ said Miss Walton. ‘We must leave considering the benefits of Christ’s death until next Sunday. Now I suppose you want to hear more of the story.’

‘Oh, yes! Ma’am, if you please,’ they exclaimed; and Miss Walton began.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

‘OH, Charles!’ said Katharine, on Saturday night after the confirmation, when all the rest had gone to bed, ‘I should be so glad if I could go to church to-morrow morning, and go with you and Helen to the Holy Communion.’

After all had gone to bed was generally the time that the brother and sister enjoyed a quiet talk. Katharine always made the little ones go in good time; and though James had at first, after his mother’s death, rebelled, by firmness and kindness she had brought him into order, and by nine o’clock he generally said good-night. Richard either was out, or went to bed in good time, and Fenning himself did the same; but Charles always lingered for a few last words with his sister. She was rocking the baby as she thus exclaimed, and Charles was sitting by her.

'You don't mean to say you can't go, Katie?' he replied; 'I have always thought you would be there, too.'

'So did I until this evening,' she said. 'I intended to have asked Aunt to take care of baby, and Richard to see about the potatoes; but Father has brought home a bullock's heart, and wants it roasting for to-morrow's dinner.'

'That is tiresome!' returned Charles. 'Why did he just choose to-morrow, I wonder, when many a Sunday goes by, and we have nothing?'

'He did not know anything about it,' said Katharine.

'And if he had, I don't suppose it would have made any difference,' said Charles, somewhat bitterly.

Katharine was silent, and presently Charles exclaimed,

'Why not fry it, Katie? then you could do it after you came in.'

'I thought of that,' she said, 'but Father would not listen to it's being fried; he says it wastes it so much.'

'And so you must stay in! Well, it is too bad!' he again exclaimed, in the same impatient tone.

Katharine looked at him reprovingly, saying, 'Remember Mother, Charles; she was always patient.'

'And you are growing like her,' returned Charles. 'Oh, Katie! I am afraid I shall never be patient, especially when I see you put upon.'

'You must not think of it so. Father did not know anything about my wish to go, and he is quite right in saying it wastes the heart to fry it. And though I am very sorry not to go, Charlie, I think Mother would say God can make it up to me. He knows I would go if I could.'

'I can't stay at home for you, or I would,' said Charles; 'but the Holy Communion is on purpose for the candidates, and it wouldn't be right for me to be away.'

'No, I wouldn't have you away for the world, the first time, too,' said Katharine, earnestly, 'or poor dear Helen either.'

'How different Helen is!' said Charles.

'Isn't she?' returned Katharine. 'It makes me so happy to look at her now; and I know she has a great deal to bear from some of the girls she works with, and yet it doesn't seem to turn her a bit.'

'That Tamar seems a good girl,' said Charles.

'Yes; and she shares Helen's little room; I'm so glad. I believe if it had not been for Tamar, Helen would never have been confirmed.'

Silence followed, when once more Charles exclaimed,

'Couldn't Richard roast the heart for you?'

'I don't think he could,' she replied, laughing; 'besides, I don't think he would stay in to do it.'

'I'll ask him,' returned Charles; 'and I'm sure he could attend to it if you'd get all ready.'

'You had better not,' said his sister.

Sunday morning came, and Charles persevered in asking Richard, and found him not only willing, but pleased to be trusted. Still, however, Katharine had her doubts: she feared it would anger her father, and wished not to propose it to him, and thought it was so fixed, and that Richard had given up the idea of staying. Richard, however, was bent upon trying his hand, and, soon after the rest had gone to school, appeared in the kitchen, saying,

'Here I am, Kate. Now get the heart ready, and I'll see to it.'

'Oh! but does Father know?' she asked.

'Not he; I took care to keep out of his sight; he thinks I'm safe at school.'

'But that is not right,' said Katharine, looking distressed; 'I would much rather have asked Father than do it slyly. I thought you'd given it up?'

'Stuff, Katharine!' he exclaimed. 'Now just you

get it ready, and start off, and never mind Father. I don't care for his storming; and when you are once gone, he can't get you back.'

'It is very kind of you to want me to go,' said Katharine, 'but I cannot let you stay without Father's leave; it wouldn't be right, Dick. You know what he said last time you stayed.'

'Yes,' he replied, indignantly; 'but I should like to see him dare to take a stick to me; he shouldn't do it a second time, I can tell you.'

'For shame, Dick! You know he's a perfect right to beat you, if you deserve it, and I don't want you to be beaten, for my sake too, so go off to school like a good boy. It's too late to ask him to let you stay now; besides, I don't know where he is.'

'I say, Kate, this won't do,' he replied, less violently. 'First, Charles asks me to stay, and then, when I venture everything, you won't let me.'

'I know Charles asked you,' she replied; 'he thought it would do, but I was sure it wouldn't. I would have asked Father, if I hadn't thought it was given up. You know I should be blamed as well as you.'

'There it is! I believe you are afraid!' he said, thinking to dare her to letting him stay. 'I wouldn't be such a coward!'

'I *am* afraid of doing wrong, Dick,' she replied, with no anger in her tone, 'and it would be wrong to let you stay, for you know Father desired you never to stay again without his leave. I'm very much obliged to you, but I would much rather now that you went to school.'

Katharine's gentle manner a little touched the rough boy, and he was on the point of relenting, when the door opened, and Fenning stood before them.

'What are *you* doing here, Richard?' he exclaimed, catching him by the shoulder, as he attempted to dart away.

'Oh, Father! he's going to school now,' said Katharine, distressed; 'he only came to ask me to let him stay and cook the dinner, while I went to church.'

'Going now!' returned the wrathful man. 'A pretty hour to be going when school is over! I told you what I would give you if I found you running away from school again!' and he began to drag Richard towards a stick which stood in the corner of the room.

'It was my fault, Father; don't, please don't, beat him!' exclaimed Katharine. 'He thought I wanted him to stay;' but Fenning was far too angry to listen, and heavy blows were soon falling upon the struggling boy, while poor Katharine implored him to stop. At length he was satisfied, and let go his hold of Richard, and began to scold Katharine with as much violence as he had beaten Richard. This, however, she bore patiently, anxiously watching Richard, who had not moved since his father had stopped beating him, nor cried out during the heavy blows. Now he stood regarding his father, his face flushed with pain and anger, his hand clenched, and almost grinding his teeth with suppressed indignation. Katharine longed to say one word to pacify him, but could not, and he was too angry to see her pleading face. Presently he moved towards the door, and on his father's stopping speaking, he said,

'Father, you have beaten me once when I didn't deserve it; you shall *never* beat me again!' and dashed out of the house. A scornful laugh was the only answer; and on Katharine's exclaiming,

'Oh, Father! go after him; he will run away, I am sure he will!'

Fenning replied,

'Let him! he'll soon be glad to run back again.'

Poor Katharine! With trembling steps and an aching heart, she now went about her work. Baby

had to be attended to, and Willie to be pacified, for he was crying with fright, and her father sat moodily by. The morning wore away, and about half-past twelve the baby fell asleep, and Willie had been in bed for some time for his morning sleep. The heart was down at the fire roasting, potatoes were washed and on, and the dinner-cloth laid. Katharine now thought she might have a little quiet, and went up to her own room. A bitter feeling of wretchedness overwhelmed her as she sank on her knees by her bed-side, and the long-repressed tears would not at first come to relieve her. But Katharine knew where alone the heavy-laden can find rest, and began to try to pray. Her first words of prayer were for her father, that God would touch his heart; and as she did this, the great bitterness of her feelings passed away; and then she prayed for her poor brother, that he might be forgiven his sin of rebellion against his father; for Katharine knew he was to blame as well as Fenning. Then her thoughts turned to Charles and Helen; at that moment she thought they would be drawing near to the altar of God, in remembrance of Christ's death, and in heart Katharine was with them. She thought, too, of her suffering, reviled Saviour; she thought how he was scourged, and spit upon, mocked, and insulted; and then, in heart, she bowed herself to the cross laid upon her. Just then she was feeling it in all its bitterness; but what was it to her Saviour's cross? What was her suffering compared with His sufferings? Upon Him had been laid the iniquity of us all. 'By Thine agony and bloody sweat; by Thy cross and passion; good Lord, deliver us,' was her prayer.

Different indeed had been the hours of that morning to Katharine, and to Helen and Charles. To them they had been hours of peace and refreshment; to her of warfare and trial; yet God had a blessing for her as well as them; her soul, too, was

strengthened as she joined them in heart and meditation on her crucified Saviour, being made a partaker of His sufferings; and when, shortly afterwards, she met them, though her countenance looked sorrowful, and Charles guessed at once that something had happened, her manner was kind and gentle.

‘Where is Richard?’ asked James, as they sat down to dinner; ‘shall I look for him, Kate?’

‘No,’ said his father; ‘if he doesn’t choose to come, he may go without his dinner. I desire you don’t save anything for him, Katharine.’

Katharine felt in her heart there would be little good in saving anything, for she felt sure, from Richard’s face and manner, that it would be long enough before they saw him again, but she only answered, ‘Very well, Father.’

It was not until after dinner that Katharine was able to tell her brother and sister what had happened, and of her fears; and then she tried to smooth down her father’s fault, fearing to rouse Charles’s anger. Whatever he may have felt, however, he only exclaimed,

‘Poor Dick! I must go and see if I can find him, and persuade him to come back.’

‘I thought John Winchfield might help you. It will anger Father if he finds you are gone; besides, John would know better how to go to work to find him.’

‘I’ll go and talk to him,’ said Charles; ‘and I’m sure no time is to be lost; but don’t fret, Katharine; I don’t think Dick will really run away; and if he does, why perhaps he’ll get on very well.’

‘Oh, yes, if only he had not looked so angry, and gone in a passion; he looked as if he hated Father,’ returned Katharine.

That afternoon, Helen offered to stay with the children; and glad was Katharine to seek for comfort and support in the quiet of God’s house.

LESSON LXXIV.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE BENEFITS OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

'If you please, Ma'am, Mrs. Colville is here, and would be glad to speak to either you or Master,' was a message brought to Miss Walton by her maid, as she sat at work one morning.

'Mr. Walton is out, but ask her to walk into the study, and I will come to her,' returned Miss Walton; and a moment afterwards she rose and met Mrs. Colville at the study door.

'Please, Ma'am,' she said, 'I've made so bold as to bring you up a letter, to ask you to read it for me. It is such writing as we poor folks can't well read, so I thought I'd bring it at once to you. I think it must be something about Hester.'

'Haven't you heard from herself lately?' asked Miss Walton, as she took the letter in her hand.

'No, Ma'am, that I haven't. It is four months come Thursday since I heard, and then she said something about leaving her place.'

Miss Walton was glancing over the letter as Mrs. Colville spoke, and now said, 'Yes, this letter is about Hester, and contains, I fear, very bad news; but sit down, Mrs. Colville, and I will read it to you directly,' she continued, seeing the poor woman turn quite pale.

Mrs. Colville sat down without speaking, and Miss Walton said again,

‘It’s from a lady in London.’

‘London, Ma’am! Hester is not in London!’ exclaimed the poor mother.

‘Yes, she is, I see from this letter,’ returned Miss Walton, fearing to read its contents all at once to Mrs. Colville.

‘God help her! a poor friendless girl in London!’ again exclaimed Mrs. Colville. ‘Oh, Ma’am, what does it mean? there must be some mistake.’

Miss Walton now read the letter. It was from a lady in London, who had given her life up to works of mercy, and it gave a sad account of Hester, which I shall tell my readers, together with what was learned at different times, by way of warning; for they remember, I hope, how careless Hester had been, how disobedient to her mother, how vain in her dress, how bold in her manner, how often she was reprov'd, and hardened her neck, how she chose bad companions notwithstanding warning, and how, at last, she had thrown herself unprotected upon the world.

The letter which Miss Walton now read said that Hester was ill, very ill; that she had been found lying on the steps of a church, too weak to move, and had been taken to a hospital near at hand; that very little hopes were entertained of her life, for that it was evident she had suffered much, and disease had taken a deep hold upon her before she had been brought to the hospital. It represented her as being then in high fever, and seldom sensible—that as yet she had been unable to give any particulars of her life, but that it was evident her conscience was burdened with sin—that she often asked for her mother in her delirium, and then would cry out, ‘No, no, not Mother, I can’t look into Mother’s face;’ and she spoke in the same way of Mr. and Miss Walton. When she was not in delirium (the letter said) she could not be prevailed upon to speak about herself or

friends, and that Mrs. Colville's direction had only been obtained from a letter found in Hester's pocket, worn almost away, indeed, but, as it seemed provisionally, the signature and the post-mark were there. A home at the House of Mercy was also offered if Mrs. Colville proved to be Hester's mother, and wished to come and see her child, but little hope was given of her living long enough. The kind lady, too, said what she could by way of comfort, telling Mrs. Colville that every care was taken of Hester, and that a chaplain visited her daily. But, oh! what a blow was this news to the poor widowed mother! She wrung her hands, exclaiming,

'My child! my lost child! lost to God and man!' It was a bitter cry, and no tears came to her relief. Miss Walton was grieved and alarmed, and she was glad, a moment afterwards, to hear Mr. Walton's step. She opened the study door and called him, hoping even the sight of him might do something.

'Oh, Sir!' exclaimed Mrs. Colville, as he entered, 'my child! my child is lost! she is dying with all her sin upon her!'

It was long before the poor woman could be at all pacified.

'We do not yet know what her sin may be, Mrs. Colville,' said Mr. Walton, 'and God may have mercy upon her. He has led her among those who can and will help her to repentance.'

Miss Walton, too, spoke of Mrs. Colville's going to her child, hoping to console her; but it was soon seen that this was impossible, for when she rose, her steps tottered; the blow had been too much for her, and she was seized with a violent fit.

Oh! what misery had Hester brought upon both herself and her aged parent! And upon herself, alas! not misery only, but guilt. She had turned away from offered blessings, and chosen the service of Satan, and now she was reaping the bitter fruits

of her choice. I must tell you a little of how she came to be in her present misery.

A situation, you may remember, she had contrived to obtain when first she went to Doughbury, and for two months she remained in it, though often giving displeasure by standing at the door, or staying out when sent on errands, and going into the street in the evenings, when her work was done. More than once her mistress threatened to send her away, and then relented. But what was the end of this unsteadiness? She was led into fearful and deeper sin, which was found out, and she was turned away on the spot. She left the house, and knew not where to go. She thought of Lucy's cousin, and went to her, but only to be met with cold looks and hard words.

'You should have stayed in the place you got. I'll have nothing more to do with you. I wouldn't have such a girl in my house, to disgrace it.'

Lucy herself had gone home again, and Hester wandered about the street for some time, knowing not what to do. She had but little money, for she had not been in her place much above two months, and her wages were small. Night, however, was coming on, and she turned into the first house where she saw lodgings written up in a miserable back street.

A day or two went by, and Hester tried in vain to get another situation. No one would have anything to say to her without a character, or rather, with a lost character. She thought of her mother and home, but felt as if she would bear anything rather than the shame of returning.

It was at this time that she again met her tempter, and was persuaded to go with him to London. Madly she rushed upon her ruin, thoughtless of God and His Commandments. Ere a week had passed, she found herself forsaken.

What her life was from that time until a week before Mrs. Colville received tidings of her, we must pass over, except to say it was a life of keen misery, and of deepening guilt.

Miss Walton wrote by return of post to the kind Sister of Mercy, thanking her for her letter, begging her for further tidings, and telling her what Hester's former life had been, and the consequence of her conduct upon her mother. And what could she say of her past life? Had it been anything *very* different to the life of many a girl? No, I fear not. For what do we see around us now, but girls loving fine dress, standing idly about the street, boldly answering every idle jest, grieving, by their behaviour, parents and friends, yet wilfully going on in conduct like this in spite of warning and instruction. Perhaps coming pretty regularly to Church and school, but taking no pains to act upon what they learn and hear. Yet withal, not without much good in them; affectionate, agreeable, quick over learning, or good servants. But now turn from this picture to Hester lying far from home on her death-bed, with all her sins now before her, crushing her to the earth, and yet unable, at that late hour, by faith to turn to Him Who came to save us from our sins, Who purchased for us, by the sacrifice of Himself, deliverance from the power of sin, from the guilt, and from the punishment. All this Hester knew; she could have answered questions about it as well as any when she chose to do so, and yet she had rejected the offered benefits. She had never wished to be saved from the power of sin, but had run into it; therefore, its guilt was now upon her, and all the horrors of eternal punishment hung over her.

Some days, however, went by before Miss Walton heard again; days of grief, for she grieved to see the stricken, suffering mother, who continued almost helpless and broken-hearted; and she mourned.

over the sin of one she had watched, taught, and loved.

Both she and Mr. Walton did all they could to comfort poor Mrs. Colville. They had her removed to her own house, and a nurse provided for her, and Mr. Walton visited her constantly, and strove to lead her to use aright even this heavy affliction; and he trusted that she was doing so, for it led her to mourn over her own sins, that she had not made Hester obedient and modest when a child, but allowed her to have her own way, and run about the street. For she was an only child, and Mrs. Colville had not liked to contradict her; but now she saw how wrongly and unkindly she had acted towards her daughter, and mourned over it as a sin before God, while she ceased not to pray for her erring child.

The next letter from London brought the account (only more fully) which I have already told you, together with the sad news that Hester was no more—that she had died three days after the former letter had been written. Before her death, however, her senses had returned, and she had told of her guilt with many tears, and begged that her mother might be written to; but the Sister gave a sad picture of her despair. Her time, too, of consciousness was very short, and though the chaplain prayed with, and for her, and strove to lead her to true repentance, and to faith in her Saviour, he could not tell how far she really did repent and believe—whether in those short hours she did truly return to her Father, through our ever-merciful Redeemer, or whether it was only the dread of coming punishment that so strongly affected her.

And we, too, must leave it in doubt. But oh! what a fearful doubt! ‘As the tree falls, so will it lie.’ If repentance came not then, the day of grace was passed for ever!

Will you not take warning? Will you seek

earnestly (from Him who is ready to help) to be saved from the power of sin, that so, in the blood of Jesus Christ, your guilt may be purged away, and its fearful punishment averted?

The sad news of Hester's death soon spread among the children. There was not one among the girls of the first class who did not feel it more or less. Not all the particulars, not even so much as you know, were known to them; it was kept back for the poor mother's sake. But one among their number knew more, and felt more than others, and that was Sarah. She had been up to the Vicarage, and Miss Walton had called her into the parlour, and told her some particulars. The tears rolled down her cheeks as Miss Walton spoke, and said,

'Might not your end have been the same, Sarah, if you had gone on in the careless, self-pleasing way you once did? I have told you what I do not wish others to know, that you may think of this; for the thought ought both to humble you, and fill you with gratitude to God Who saved you from sin's power, and from so deep a guilt.'

And Sarah *did* think of it. As she sat at work, the tears kept blinding her eyes when she thought over her lost companion, and her own past wilfulness and frequent backslidings, and her prayers that night were more humble, and her preparation for the Holy Communion the following Sunday more earnest. She thought, with deeper gratitude, of what Christ had done for her, of the unspeakable blessing of being called to repentance before her last hours; and she prayed that she might show forth her thankfulness not only with her lips, but in her life, by giving up herself to His service, Who had given Himself a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for her sins, and the sins of the whole world.

Poor Mrs. Colville never entirely recovered the shock. She had always been weak and sickly, but

it was long after this ere she left her bed, and longer still before she was able to go out; and when she did, it was with tottering steps, and a bent body, to seek for comfort and support at God's own house, and to join, for the first time, in showing forth Christ's death in that holy Feast which He has Himself appointed.

'Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?' asked Miss Walton of her assembled class.

Several. 'For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.'

Miss W. What are we to remember besides the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross?

All. 'The benefits which we receive thereby.'

Miss W. By what?

Several. The death of Christ.

Miss W. And what is His death called?

Mary. A sacrifice.

Miss W. And why did you tell me, last Sunday, we needed this sacrifice?

'Because we had sinned,' said Sarah.

'And God was angry with us,' added Mary.

Miss W. Yes; and why could we not turn away God's anger ourselves?

Rose. Because sin made us guilty, and we had nothing to offer to God.

'We were afraid to come before Him,' said Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; guilt had brought the curse, and everything lay under the curse, and, therefore, we could offer nothing to atone for our sin—to wash away our guilt—to reconcile us to God, but what was defiled by sin, and cursed—so Who offered Himself?

All. Christ.

Miss W. To be—what?

Margaret. 'A sacrifice for sin.'

Miss W. Thus, a sacrifice being provided, our condition was changed. For, what did Christ's sacrifice obtain for us which we are to remember?

Ruth. Benefits.

Miss W. And what do you mean by 'benefits'?

Anna. Good things.

Miss W. Yes, favours. Now if we see how our condition was changed by the sacrifice of Christ, we shall see what are the benefits which we receive thereby. You say sin had made us guilty; Christ appeared to put away—what?

Margaret. Sin.

Miss W. Yes; and to be our—?

'Saviour,' continued several.

Miss W. What does St. Paul say He was made for us? 2 Cor. v. 21.

Jane. 'He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin.'

Miss W. That is to say, He took upon Himself our guilt. He stood in the place of sinners, though innocent, and bore the punishment of our sin. Why?

Rose. 'That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.'

Miss W. How did St. John the Baptist point Him out to his disciples?

Ruth. 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' (St. John, i. 29.)

Miss W. Or, as it might be read, beareth the sin of the world. He was the Lamb prepared for sacrifice upon Whom our sin was laid. What, then, did He remove from us by His death?

Several. The guilt of sin.

Miss W. If you remember our lesson on the name of 'Jesus,' you will be able to tell me more easily what are the benefits of Christ's death. From what three things did you then tell me He saved us?

Emily. The guilt, the punishment, and the power of sin.

Miss W. And these benefits were obtained—how?

Sarah. By the sacrifice of the death of Christ.

Miss W. Quite right. His death, then, removed from us, first—what?

Several. The guilt of sin.

Miss W. Yes; because what was then shed?

Anna. Blood.

Miss W. What sort of blood? (The girls did not answer, and Miss Walton said again,) Why did God appoint three cities of refuge to the children of Israel?

Rose. That any one might flee there who had killed his neighbour unawares. (See Num. xxxv. 11.)

Miss W. And so the land might be saved from—what? (Still the girls did not answer, and Miss Walton said,) Look at Deut. xix. 10.

Bessie. 'That innocent blood be not shed in thy land.'

Miss W. Then if a person were put to death unjustly—for that of which he was not guilty—what was shed?

Several. Innocent blood.

Miss W. Then what sort of blood was our Saviour's?

Several. Innocent blood.

Miss W. Innocent because He was not Himself guilty of that for which He suffered; 'in Him was no sin.' And thus His innocent blood could atone for—what?

Agnes. Our guilt.

Miss W. From what does St. John say it cleanseth?

Ruth. 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 St. John, i. 7.)

Miss W. And again look at chap. iii. 5.

Alice. 'He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.'

Miss W. We were born in sin, but by the blood of Christ, what change does St. Paul say is made? 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Emily. 'Ye are *washed*; ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'

Miss W. Washed in what?

Several. The blood of Christ.

Miss W. Therefore 'sanctified,' or made—?

'Holy,' said one or two.

Miss W. And what else?

Harriet. 'Justified.'

Miss W. And if justified, no longer—?

'Guilty,' said Rose.

Miss W. And thus the sacrifice of Christ cleanses us from—?

Mary. The guilt of sin.

Miss W. Give me another text which speaks of sin's being washed away in the blood of Christ?

Agnes. 'Unto Him that loved us, *and washed us from our sins in His own blood* . . . to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.' (Rev. i. 5, 6.)

Miss W. And we are said to have redemption—how?

Margaret. 'Through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.' (Eph. i. 7.)

Miss W. We see, then, that one of the benefits we obtained by the sacrifice of His death is the removal of—what?

Several. The guilt of sin.

Miss W. Now from what else do you say He saves us?

Jane. From the punishment of sin.

Miss W. And how did His death do this?

Margaret. Because He then bore the punishment.

Miss W. Yes. Why was He wounded?

Ruth. 'For our transgressions—He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was

upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.' (Isaiah, liii. 5.)

Miss W. Look also at Isaiah, l. 6.

Bessie. 'I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting.'

Miss W. And thus He bore—?

'The punishment of our sin,' said one or two.

Miss W. And thereby delivered us from it. 'Now,' St. Paul says, 'there is no condemnation to'—whom?

Sarah. 'Them that are in Christ Jesus.' (Rom. viii. 1.)

Miss W. And in another place he says, 'We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in'—Whom?

'God which raiseth the dead; Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver.' (2 Cor. i. 10. See also, 1 Thes. i. 10.)

Miss W. Christ, by dying, delivered us from death, the punishment of sin. The second great benefit, then, which we receive by the sacrifice of Christ, is deliverance from—what?

Several. The punishment of sin.

Miss W. But, further, He saves from—?

'The power of sin,' said Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; and this, too, by His sacrifice; for the blood of Christ purges our conscience from—what?

Anna. 'Dead works to serve the living God.' (Heb. ix. 14.)

Miss W. And again St. Peter says, 'God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him'—for what?

Jane. 'To bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' (Acts, iii. 26.)

Miss W. He raised Him up to be a Saviour, as He had before raised up Moses—for what purpose?

Rose. To save the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt.

Miss W. So He raised up Christ, and sent Him to bless us in saving us from—what bondage?

‘Sin,’ said some.

‘Satan,’ said others.

Miss W. Yes; ‘as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets . . . that we being delivered’—from what?

Several. ‘Out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.’

Miss W. And He has delivered us—how?

Agnes. By the sacrifice of His death.

Miss W. Once more look at 1 St. Peter, iv. 1, 2.

Harriet. ‘Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.’

Miss W. Who tempts us to sin?

Several. The devil.

Miss W. And whom did Christ overcome by His death and resurrection?

All. The devil.

Miss W. He bruised his head, and so weakened his power over us; and being thus, by the sacrifice of Christ, ‘made free from sin, and become servants of God,’ what should be our fruit?

Rose. ‘Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.’ (Rom. vi. 22.)

Miss W. The third benefit, then, of the sacrifice of the death of Christ is deliverance from—?

Several. The power of sin.

Miss W. Then our whole condition is changed by Christ’s death. Our guilt, which put us at enmity with God, He has taken (off us) upon—?

‘Himself,’ said one or two.

Miss W. The punishment which hung over us, He—?

‘Has borne for us,’ said Mary.

Miss W. And so set us free from it. The hopeless power which sin had over us, He has—?

‘Weakened,’ said Margaret.

Miss W. Yes, by bruising the author of it, and (by setting us free) strengthening us to overcome sin. In one word, His sacrifice has reconciled us to God, with Whom we were at enmity. Look at Col. i. 21, 22.

Alice. ‘And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath *He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death*, to present you holy and unblameable and un-reproveable in His sight.’

Miss W. And again, 2 Cor. v. 18.

Bessie. ‘And all things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.’ (See also Rom. vi. 10, 11; Eph. ii. 16.)

Miss W. And, lastly, having thus reconciled us to God, what are we told in the Te Deum He has opened for us?

Emily. ‘When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death: Thou didst open the kingdom of Heaven to all believers.’

Miss W. Yes; He opened Heaven for us, but not until—when?

Agnes. He had overcome the sharpness of death.

Miss W. Not until He had purchased it for us by the sacrifice of Himself. You may read Col. i. 12–14.

Anna. ‘Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the*

kingdom of His dear Son : in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Miss W. And, again, look at Heb. x. 19, 20, and see how we have boldness to enter into the holy place.

Ruth. 'Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.'

Miss W. And what is meant by the 'holiest'? Look at chap. ix. 24.

Emily. 'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.'

Miss W. Then the 'holiest' is—?

Several. Heaven.

Miss W. And we have only boldness to enter—how?

Margaret. By the blood of Jesus.

Miss W. Having reconciled us to God by the sacrifice of Himself, He has opened the way to the holiest, into Heaven itself, to all believers. Thus we see the benefits which we receive—how?

All. By the sacrifice of the death of Christ.

Miss W. They are benefits purchased for all—but do all accept them? You may look again at Col. i. 23. After speaking of the benefits of Christ's death, on what condition does St. Paul say they will avail?

Sarah. 'If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.'

Miss W. If ye continue in faith, he says—that is, having laid hold upon the offered blessings, you do not again reject them, or neglect to use them. What do I mean by 'reject'?

'Refuse,' said Anna.

'Turn from,' said Rose.

Miss W. The benefits of Christ's death have already been, as it were, made over to us—when?

Several. In our Baptism.

Miss W. When, instead of being left children of wrath, we were made—?

All. Children of grace.

Miss W. And, instead of being left aliens, were made—?

Mary. 'Inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven.'

Miss W. Yes; 'Christians have once been reconciled to God by Jesus Christ, and the kingdom has been opened to them. But how can we, after all, be cast away?'

Several. By choosing sin.

Mary. By refusing to look to Christ.

Miss W. Yes, by throwing the benefits from us, by rejecting them after they have been made ours. Christ having purchased good things for us, and given them to us, does not secure them to us in spite of ourselves; because we may reject them. He offered Himself to deliver man from the power of sin, but if we choose Satan for our master, into what shall we be led?

Several. Into sin.

Miss W. Then, will Christ deliver us from its power, if we choose to give way to it?

Agnes. No, only if we turn from it.

Miss W. Supposing a person offered to free twenty slaves from their master, and accordingly paid a fixed price for their ransom. From whose power would they be set free?

Emily. The power of their master.

Miss W. And would they be any longer bound to do his work?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. But supposing six out of the twenty made no use of their freedom, but went on working

for their master just as they did before, and still wore the chain, and chose to be under the same laws as before. As long as they did this, would the purchase of their freedom benefit them?

Anna. No, because they would have refused it.

'Only if they changed their minds,' said little Agnes.

Miss W. You mean they could at any time claim their freedom, if once it had been purchased?

Agnes. Yes, Ma'am.

Miss W. Very good, Agnes. Still the example answers. Christ has purchased for us freedom from—whom?

Several. Satan.

Miss W. So that we need not do his work. What is his work?

All. Sin.

Miss W. But how can we make the benefit of freedom of no avail?

'By going on doing the devil's work,' said some.

'By sinning,' said others.

Miss W. Yes, by still submitting in everything to our old master. But you say, if the six slaves changed their minds, they could at any time claim their freedom. Now what does God promise to those who truly repent?

All. Forgiveness.

Miss W. Yes, in great mercy He promises not to reject those who change their minds, and turn to Him, even though they have long neglected His offered freedom. But supposing, girls, that when the price was paid for the freedom of those twenty slaves, it was agreed that they must take advantage of the offered release before a year was out, or be again considered slaves, and that they were told, not how long, but that they must not delay to claim their freedom, or they would lose it, and that yet they put off, and put off—what might be the consequence?

Mary. They would put off too long.

Miss W. And, then, what would follow?

Several. Their freedom would be lost.

Miss W. Now, is the time also limited in which we can claim the freedom Christ has purchased for us? When will it be too late?

Emily. When we die.

Miss W. Yes; in the grave is no repentance. And do we know when we shall die?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. We may be called from this world at any moment, and if we have rejected the offered deliverance from sin and Satan *before*, it will *then* be too late. The year will have expired, and we shall be hopelessly slaves. And think how bitter it will be to remember that we had been set free, and refused to accept the offered freedom while the day of grace lasted—that our misery is our own choosing. It depends, then, upon our own choice, whether we reject or lay hold on the benefits which Christ's sacrifice has purchased for us, of deliverance from the power of—?

'Sin and Satan,' they replied.

Miss W. And what does sin make us?

Several. Guilty in God's sight.

Miss W. And what is due to guilt?

Jane. Punishment.

Miss W. In refusing, then, the benefit of freedom from sin, guilt remains upon us, and we refuse the benefit of—what else?

Rose. Freedom from punishment.

Miss W. Yes; and thus all the benefits of the sacrifice of the death of Christ are lost to us. And lest, through very thoughtlessness, the unspeakable loss should be ours, what did Christ appoint to help us to remember His sacrifice, and the benefits purchased for us?

Several. The Lord's Supper.

Miss W. He appointed it when, do you say?

Several. Just before His crucifixion.

Miss W. And did He tell us it was to be a memorial?

Margaret. Yes; He said, 'This do in remembrance of Me.' (St. Luke, xxii. 19.)

Miss W. And look what St. Paul says in 1 Cor. ii. 26.

Bessie. 'For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.'

Miss W. Of what should the broken bread remind us?

Emily. Of Christ's Body broken.

Miss W. Yes, of the wounds His Body received for our sakes. How was It wounded?

Several. By the nails and spear.

Miss W. And before that, by the cruel scourge, and what else?

Agnes. The crown of thorns.

Miss W. And of what must the wine poured out remind us?

Several. Of His Blood shed.

Miss W. And as the wine comes from the juice of many grapes, so the Blood of Christ flowed from—what?

'Many wounds,' said Anna.

Miss W. From His hands—?

'And feet,' continued Mary. 'And from His side and forehead.'

Miss W. When His Body was wounded, His Blood flowed; so when the bread is broken, which represents the one, the wine is poured out, to represent the other. It is not, however, well to *speak much of these sacred mysteries, girls, but to think of them, to remember them as Christ has bidden us. And how are we to remember them?*

Several. In the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. How often?

Several. Continually.

Miss W. Christ's death, and the benefits we obtain thereby, should never be out of our minds. I do not mean that we should always be actually thinking of them, but that they should be so much part of our every thought, as to influence every action. But our thoughts should be directly upon them—when?

Several. In the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes. Then we should set ourselves to remember—to meditate upon, and think over—both the sacrifice and the benefits we obtain thereby. But now I think I have said enough to you for one lesson. How it thus is a remembrance, and how we should use it, we shall learn more fully in future lessons.

'Please, Ma'am, can't you read to us?' asked Agnes, in a whisper.

'No, I can't,' returned Miss Walton. 'I am going to see poor Mrs. Colville.'

The very name brought a thoughtful expression over the faces of many of the girls, as they began to put away the books and other things.

LESSON LXXV.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE OUTWARD SIGN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

'How many parts are there in a Sacrament, girls?' asked Miss Walton.

Several. 'Two; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.'

Miss W. 'What is the outward part, or sign, of the Lord's Supper?'

All. 'Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.'

Miss W. And what do the bread and wine signify?

Anna. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. And in receiving His Body and Blood, what inward spiritual grace is conveyed to the soul?

Rose. Strengthening and refreshing.

Miss W. By what?

Sarah. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Which our Catechism teaches, are 'verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.' And the outward sign of this Blessed Body and Blood is—?

Margaret. Bread and Wine.

Miss W. We saw that the outward sign of Baptism well conveyed to our minds the inward grace of which it is a sign, for—what does water do for our bodies?

Ruth. Cleanses them.

Miss W. So what is done for our souls in Baptism?
Several. They are cleansed from sin.

Miss W. Thus, too, the outward part of the Lord's Supper fitly represents the benefits we receive thereby. What does bread do for our bodies?

'Feeds them,' said some.

Miss W. Yes; and if they were never fed, what would become of them?

Anna. They would die.

Miss W. And if we go a long time without food, how do we feel?

'Hungry,' said some.

'Weak,' said others.

Miss W. Yes, we are weak; but if we take bread, and eat it, what does the bread do for us?

'Strengthens us,' replied several.

'Satisfies us,' said one or two.

Miss W. It strengthens us. And again, if we are faint, what would revive us?

Bessie. Wine.

Miss W. Yes; when we are low and faint, wine will refresh. Now what do you say are the benefits which we receive in the Lord's Supper?

All. 'The *strengthening* and *refreshing* of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine.'

Miss W. What bread and wine, then, are to the body, the Body and Blood of Christ are to—what?

Several. The soul.

Miss W. As our bodies, weak and hungry, are strengthened by bread; or faint and weary, are refreshed by wine; so our souls are strengthened and refreshed—how?

Mary. By the Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Yes, when verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. Does Christ ever promise food to the hungry and thirsty soul? Who does He say shall be filled?

•

Agnes. 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.' (St. Matt. v. 6.)

Miss W. And whom does He invite to buy food?

Rose. 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.' (Isa. lv. 1.)

Miss W. And He Who has given this invitation, has provided the food and drink. What is it?

Margaret. His Body and Blood.

Miss W. Yes; look at St. John, vi. 55.

Alice. 'For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed.'

Miss W. And how are these, His Body and Blood, received by the faithful?

Several. In the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes; in eating and drinking—what?

Jane. Bread and Wine.

Miss W. But you said, without food our bodies would die, so our Lord chose food to signify Himself, without Whom our souls would die. What has He called Himself in St. John, vi. 35?

Ruth. 'The Bread of Life.'

Miss W. And, then, what does He say in verse 57?

Sarah. 'As the Living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.'

Miss W. As surely as food is necessary to the life of the body, so surely Christ is necessary to the life of the soul; and our blessed Saviour taught us this great truth in choosing bread and wine, food for the body, to be a sign of—what, girls?

Several. His Body and Blood.

Miss W. Yes, which He tells us in such solemn words, Except we eat and drink, we have no life in us. (See St. John, vi. 53.) Thus we see that

bread and wine are a fitting sign of the inward and spiritual grace of the Lord's Supper. What did you say a child required, to live and grow after birth?

Several. Food.

Miss W. And when were we new-born?

Several. In Baptism.

Miss W. And what do we require, to live and grow after this new birth?

Several. Food, nourishment.

Miss W. Yes, that our new spiritual life may grow and prosper. And has God left us without this food?

Margaret. No; He gave Christ to be our food.

Miss W. Yes; He gives Himself to us in eating and drinking—?

'The bread and wine in the Lord's Supper,' said Anna.

Miss W. The Church teaches us to thank our Heavenly Father for that He hath given His only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, not only to die for us—but, what else?

Sarah. 'To be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy Sacrament.'

Miss W. David, too, the man after God's own heart, foretold of this Heavenly Food. Why does he say he can lack nothing?

Mary. Because God is his Shepherd.

Miss W. And what does he say his Shepherd will do for him?

Several. 'He shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.'

Miss W. And what does he say shall be prepared for him?

Emily. 'Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me: Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.' (Ps. xxiii. 2, 5.)

Miss W. And this has been done—how?

Several. In the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Who has prepared it?

Agnes. Christ Himself.

Miss W. And what is the outward sign in this holy Supper?

Alice. 'Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.'

Miss W. You have, once or twice lately, told me about the institution of the Lord's Supper, and this command; but now I want you to pay particular and reverent attention to it, and yet, girls, I hesitate to speak of this sacred subject to you all. I am afraid of any irreverent word or action which should bring sin upon you.

Miss Walton stopped speaking, and looked round the class to see if all were attentive, and whether she might venture to go on. She was grieved to see Harriet at that very moment whispering to Bessie, while a smile was upon her face. Miss Walton looked pained, and said seriously,

'Harriet and Bessie, you may both go away; I fear, from your manner, you are not in a fit state of mind to listen to questions on this sacred subject.'

The two girls looked surprised, and Harriet rose to leave the room, but Bessie said with hesitation,

'Please, Ma'am, I was not talking. I didn't speak.'

'But where are your thoughts, Bessie?' said Miss Walton.

'Please, Ma'am, I will be attentive,' she replied, 'if I may stay.'

'In heart as well as outwardly, I hope, Bessie, or you will be in no fit state to answer; but if you really wish it, you may stay,' replied Miss Walton.

Harriet, however, was still standing, neither going or speaking; and her face was expressive of *anxiety but seriousness*, for she was repressing a smile at the time. When Miss Walton gave Bessie leave

to stay, she seemed to expect the same; but as she made no promise, Miss Walton, after waiting a moment to see what she would do, said,

‘I am waiting for you to go, Harriet, for your manner is still far from humble and reverent.’

With a toss of her head, and a look and laugh towards Bessie, (which Miss Walton was glad to see was not returned,) Harriet walked out of the room; and Miss Walton then asked,

‘Of what feast were our Lord and His disciples partaking when He gave this command?’

Rose. The Passover.

Miss W. Yes; and as they were eating, what did He do?

Margaret. ‘Took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said: Take, eat; this is My Body.’ (St. Matt. xxvi. 26.)

Miss W. Thus what does He command us to receive?

Several. Bread.

Miss W. And what did He say that bread was?

Agnes. His Body.

Miss W. And what did He bid them do with it?

Several. Eat it. ‘Take, eat.’

Miss W. The Bread, then, we see, is the outward sign of—what?

Margaret. His Body.

Miss W. So that the faithful receiver of it verily receives the Lord’s Body. And what further are we told He did?

Emily. ‘Took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’

Miss W. And what did the cup contain?

Several. Wine.

Miss W. Yes; for our Lord went on to say, ‘I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine;’

and wine, we know, is the fruit of the vine. Thus, what else besides bread did He command us to receive?

'Wine,' said Anna.

Miss W. And what did He say that the wine was?

Several. His Blood.

Miss W. And what did He bid His disciples do with it?

Margaret. 'Drink ye all of it.'

Miss W. Of what, then, do we see the wine is the outward sign?

Several. Christ's Blood.

Miss W. Yes; so that the faithful receiver of it verily receives—?

'The Blood of Christ,' said Margaret reverently. (See St. Matt. xxvi. 26-29.)

Miss W. And in one short command our Saviour sums all up. What was it?

Emily. 'This do in remembrance of Me.' (St. Luke, xxii. 19.)

Miss W. And thus He appointed His Supper to take the place of the Passover; His sacrifice to be henceforth remembered, (not the lamb of the Passover,) in that He was the true Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. In the outward sign, then, of bread and wine, what should we see by faith?

Several. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Why do you say the Holy Supper was ordained?

Several. 'For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ.'

Miss W. It was then to represent, or show forth His death, or remind us of it. Then in it we should see—?

Agnes. Christ dying for us.

Miss W. Yes. His offering of Himself is represented to us in the bread broken, and the wine poured

out. What did Christ say He would give for the life of the world?

Several. His flesh. (See St. John, vi. 51.)

Miss W. But was Christ always clothed in flesh?

Ruth. No; not until He was born of the Virgin Mary.

Miss W. True. Then He *took* flesh. Before He could offer it up to death, He *took* it. What do we say of this in the Collect for the Sunday before Easter?

The girls found the place, and Alice read, 'Almighty and everlasting God, Who, of Thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross.'

Miss W. Then first He took flesh, then He—?

'Offered it on the cross,' said Mary.

Miss W. So what did Christ do with that which signifies His flesh in the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. He took bread.

Miss W. As He *took* flesh, so He *took* bread, which was to signify His Body. But did He take the sin of man together with the flesh?

Several. No. In Him is no sin.

Miss W. He sanctified human flesh by taking it to Himself. So, having taken bread, what did He do?

Emily. Blessed it.

Miss W. And thus made it holy, and sanctified it. And further: Having taken human flesh, to what did He yield it up?

Anna. To death upon the cross.

Miss W. Yes. He suffered His sinless Body to be broken on the cross; He gave His back to the smiters . . . He hid not His face from shame and spitting. And what did He do with the bread that He had blessed?

Ross. He broke it.

W. And thus showed forth, or represented dy broken. And lastly, for whom did He is Body to be broken?

For us.

W. So what did He do with the bread and broken?

al. Gave it to the disciples.

W. Yes, saying, 'Take, eat; this is My The wine, too, taken and poured out, represents Blood taken with our nature, and shed for emption. For what was poured out upon s?

Christ's Blood.

W. And what is poured into the cup?

al. Wine.

W. And for Whom was His sinless Blood shed? For us.

W. Yes; He poured out His sinless Blood and gave it for us; and what did He do with ?

al. 'He took the cup, and gave thanks, and to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this blood.'

W. In the wine poured out, then, and given represented—?

Christ's Blood given and shed for us.

W. And these, His gifts, and His words of , reach even to us. Christ's blessing still on the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, still says to us, 'Take, eat: Drink ye all of ling us, 'This do in remembrance of Me.' re, what do clergymen do with the bread of amunion?

aret. They take it, and bless it, and break it, e it to all.

W. And what do they do with the wine?

y. They take the cup, and bless it, and give

Miss W. And what words do they say?

Several. The same as Christ spoke.

Miss W. Yes; and they do not even take the words, and use them as their own, but—what do they say?

Anna. Jesus Christ, 'in the same night that He was betrayed, took bread,' &c.

Miss W. It is His blessing, then, and His act of giving, and His words, 'This is My Body,' and 'This is My Blood,' which still with prayer for the Holy Spirit, sanctify the bread and the wine. The Priest recounts His words, and shows forth His act; and our thoughts should go back to Christ sitting among His disciples at that Last Supper, and we should hear His voice speaking, and receive the bread and wine as from His Hands, and thus remember Him. But these sacred signs are more to us than representations. You say the outward part of a Sacrament is not only a sign of grace given, but what else?

Several. 'A means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.'

Miss W. Then what are the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper a means of our receiving?

Sarah. 'The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.'

Miss W. Look what St. Paul says of this in 1 Cor. x. 16.

Bessie. 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?'

Miss W. 'Communication' might be used, or the giving of the Body and Blood of Christ. And he says they are communicated or given—how?

Rose. By the cup of blessing, and the bread broken.

Miss W. Yes, the outward signs are the means of

our own receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ, by Christ's own appointment. Therefore, what are we said to eat, in the address to those who mind to come to the Holy Communion?

Emily. 'Then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood.'

Miss W. Of this, however, I will say more another time. Tell me how are the bread and wine also pledges of grace? (Not receiving an answer, Miss Walton said again,) Who left them with us?

Several. Christ.

Miss W. Who said, 'This is My Body,' and 'This is My Blood'?

All. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Very well. Then surely they are pledges left with us to assure us of the heavenly food of the most precious Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ. They are to the faithful that which He said they should be; and as surely as we take and eat the bread, and drink the wine, in faith and penitence, so surely shall our souls be strengthened and refreshed by the Body and Blood of Christ. And now, girls, can you tell me whether our Lord, in any of His miracles, foreshadowed this Feast of the Gospel? What did He do for the great multitude who followed Him into the wilderness?

Several. Fed them with five barley loaves and two small fishes.

Miss W. Yes; and in this miracle He wonderfully foreshadowed the Lord's Supper. Turn to St. John, vi. and we shall see how. Were there many to be fed?

Jane. Yes; five thousand men.

Miss W. Besides women and children (one of the other Evangelists tells us); and how much had our Lord wherewith to feed them?

All. 'Five barley loaves and two small fishes.'

Miss W. And what did Christ do with this small supply?

Margaret. 'He took the loaves, and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down.'

Miss W. Very good; and thus He typified the Feast of the Gospel; for are there many or few to be fed with it?

Mary. Many.

Miss W. And before they can be fed, to Whom must they go?

Mary. To Christ.

Miss W. Yes; and with what does He promise to feed all who come to Him?

Margaret. His own Body and Blood.

Miss W. Which are signified by what?

All. Bread and wine.

Miss W. Yes; blessed, broken, and given to the disciples,—left with the Church to be distributed—by whom?

Several. The clergymen.

Miss W. Christ feeds us by the hand of His ministers as He fed the multitude by the hand of His Apostles.

Miss Walton now closed her books, and said, 'I am sorry Harriet should miss the story. I had forgotten it when I sent her quite away.'

'Please, Ma'am, shall I look if she's outside?' asked Ruth.

'Yes, you may look, but I don't suppose she's returned Miss Walton.'

Ruth jumped up, and ran outside and called Harriet, but in vain; she had gone quite away, and not waited for the rest, as the girls thought she would have done; and Miss Walton was obliged to go on without her, saying to Jane,

'You must tell her how the story went to Jane.'

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

It is seven years to-day since poor Richard ran away from home! was Katharine's thought as she stood up to the fire, and put on the kettle for tea, before going up-stairs to take off her things after coming in from Church.

Seven years, is it? And what has happened in these seven years? What changes have taken place? What influence has the elder sister had on her younger brothers and sisters? What has become of Charles? And how has poor Helen gone on?

Perhaps if we join Katharine again a few minutes afterwards, some of our curiosity may be satisfied. At first, I must tell you that we do not find her in the same house in which we knew her before. The house in which she now lives stands, indeed, on the edge of the common, but it is smaller than the old house, and the furniture looks new, not at all as if it had been knocked about by a family of children, and the little garden in front is in beautiful order, and full of pretty flowers. Go to the gate of the garden, and you will see the old house from it, not now standing alone, for many houses have sprung up round it, yet none look so comfortable as the one into which Katharine has just entered, and gone up-stairs. Cannot you now guess one change? It is not Katharine Fenning, but Katharine Winchfield, who now comes down, looking so neat and tidy, and so happy, holding by the hand a little girl of about seven or eight years old.

'Run to the gate,' she said to the child, 'and see if John is coming.'

Three months have passed by since Katharine was married, months of happiness and peace such as she had never known before; and the little girl, whom she has just sent to the gate, is her baby sister, (as

we knew her,) now grown into a useful, handy little girl.

Scarcely a moment passed by before little Martha returned, holding by the hand her godfather, now her brother-in-law, though to her, indeed, he was more like a father.

'Your father is very bad to-night,' were John's words as he entered the cottage. 'Helen says she shall not like to leave him, but Charles says he will step in sometime this evening, when the children have gone to bed. He does not like to leave while they are up, for it is more than Miriam can do to keep Master Willie quiet when Helen is up-stairs.'

'Why didn't you bring him here?' asked Katharine; 'then he would have been out of the way.'

'I wanted to do so, but Charles said he had been naughty in church, so he could not let him come.'

'I am glad Charles keeps the upper-hand with Willie, for he has all poor Dick's spirits and wilfulness about him, which must be kept under.'

'Yes; and I think Charles will do it, for Willie didn't say a word, though he looked fit to cry. Charles has got such a quiet way with him now, that no child would think of disobeying him.'

'And yet they are all so fond of him,' said Katharine. 'Dear Charles! I don't know what I should have done without him those years after my mother's death, John.'

'I know he was a good brother,' said John; 'not better than his sister deserved,' he added, fondly.

'I must go and see poor Father, when Martha has gone to bed,' said Katharine, (for Martha was now the adopted child of Katharine and John. Katharine could not bear to part from her when she married, and John was willing to have his little god-child always with him.) 'I think he likes to see me go in, though he says so little.'

Some of our questions are now, I think, answered.

We see that Helen is at home, nursing her father, who has been very ill for the last fortnight. Charles is still at home, the same kind brother that ever he was, but with more gentleness and self-command than he used to have. Miriam, now turned of fifteen, has, as far as she is able, taken Katharine's place, doing all the household work, while Helen attends to her dress-making, which she is now doing on her own account. Kezia and Willie are also at home, and attend the daily school. The former is a thoughtful, delicate child; the latter, full of spirits, and rather hard to manage by any one except Katharine and Charles. James has got a situation as shopman with Helen's godfather, Henry Bushman, and very pleasant letters they have hitherto received from him, and good accounts they hear of him on the whole, for he is steady and industrious, and gets on well in his business; but Katharine sometimes has an anxious thought about him, for she fears he has not learnt to seek *first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and she knows that all goes wrong if God has not the first place. James had, indeed, been confirmed, and he was very regular at church, but he held back from the Holy Communion. He thought he could do very well without it at present, that it was time enough to go there when he got older; and Katharine knew that the soul cannot thrive without it; that as bread is to the body, so the Bread of Life is to the soul. If James had turned away from bodily food, she would have felt sure something was amiss,—that he was not well,—even if he could not mention any one particular ailment; and equally sure she felt that the turning away from the Holy Communion was a sign of inward disease, and this made her anxious about him.

'As long as he is free from great temptations, I dare say he will seem to do very well,' she said to her husband, 'but I greatly fear he would be weak

against great ones.' And Katharine, I think, judged rightly; for a person who takes but little nourishment, although he may be able to get through his daily work without much difficulty for some time, would find his strength fail if *extra* exertion was called for. Alas! how many there are who, like James, turn away from the strengthening food prepared for the soul, and yet expect to be able to meet and overcome temptation; but how few there are who act in this way in worldly things! If a man has a work to do, and bread and wine are set before him, would he turn away without tasting, and go fainting to his task? Would he not thankfully receive the strengthening food, and refreshing drink, and so find himself equal to his work? Why do we act differently in our heavenly work?—in our warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil? Surely, in choosing bread and wine, (whereby our bodies are strengthened and refreshed,) to signify the Body and Blood of Christ, (whereby our souls are strengthened and refreshed,) our blessed Lord taught us to look upon *the one as being as needful to the soul as the other is to the body*. He taught us that in refusing to eat of His Body and Blood, we should be acting as foolishly as in refusing to eat and drink for the support of the body, and that the end, in both cases, must be similar; as the body is weakened, so the soul is weakened; as the body in the end would die, so except we eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, we have no life in us. (See St. John, vi. 53.)

It was such thoughts as these that made Katharine anxious about her brother, when, outwardly, all seemed to be going on well.

And what has become of Richard? John Winchfield found him out, and saw him just before he sailed for Africa, and he did not even try to persuade him to return home; but he did try, in vain, to per-

suade him to send a message to his father, some token of submission. 'Did he send any message to me?' was the boy's question; and John durst not repeat the words of cursing he had spoken, and Richard's proud spirit would not bend. He sent love to his brothers and sisters, and said when he had made his fortune he would come and see them, but not one word to his father. His clothes Katharine had made up into a bundle and sent to him, and some little money of her own savings, to which Charles (and John himself, though unknown to any) added; and with this slender provision Richard sailed, working his passage out; but, alas! he sailed in pride and anger, with a father's curse upon him; how could he expect to succeed? From that time nothing had been heard of him.

A sad account I have also to give of Fenning himself; from the time of Richard's leaving, he grew worse, for he took to drinking, and the wages which had been brought home to buy food and clothing for his children, were now mostly spent in the beer-shop. The habit grew upon him by degrees, but for the last few years it had gained quite the mastery, and night after night he returned home to be a terror, or an object of grief, or scorn, to his own children. These were years of bitter trial to poor Katharine, for, added to her other troubles, was the difficulty of providing food and clothing for the children. Had it not been for Charles's wages, every penny of which was given to her, and the little which Helen every now and then brought to her, the children at times would have had nothing to eat; and, as it was, there was scarcely a sufficiency; and poor Katharine grieved to see Kezia growing paler and thinner almost daily for want of better food, and little Martha, her peculiar charge, crying for bread when she had none to give. At any moment *she* might have escaped from these troubles, for John had been

pressing her to be his wife for some years, but Katharine always said,

‘I cannot leave the children until Helen can come to live at home, and Miriam is old enough to take the house-work.’ This arrangement had at length been accomplished, and Katharine then consented to be the wife of the man she had so long loved. But though she had left home, she was still near at hand, and it was to her that all looked for help and comfort. And now that you know something of the past seven years, we may return to the quiet cottage of John and Katharine.

With little Martha between them, (now looking the picture of health and happiness since she had had better food, and been removed from her father, of whom she had an unconquerable dread,) the husband and wife forgot their anxieties for a little while, and enjoyed their cup of tea, and a quiet talk. They sat long over their meal, until twilight had passed away. At length Katharine rose up, saying, ‘I may take a bit of this hot cake to poor Kizzy, may I not? Perhaps it will tempt her to eat.’

‘Anything you like,’ was the reply; for John earned good wages, and they were able to live with many comforts about them which had long been banished from Fenning’s house; and a hot cake was sometimes a Sunday treat.

Katharine set it on the hob, and poured out the cup of tea which was still left in the teapot, which she set by the side of the cake, and then, with Martha’s help, soon cleared away the things.

‘I’ll step over with this, then, and say a word to poor Father, while you hear Martha say her Catechism,’ said Katharine, as she took down her bonnet, and threw a shawl over her shoulders.

‘Well, don’t stay long,’ returned John. ‘Come, Martha, let me hear how much more you have rned since last Sunday.’

The little girl sprang upon his knees, saying, 'Oh, I know to the end of the fourth Commandment now.'

'Then stand up to say it,' he replied, 'and then you shall come upon my knee.'

Martha obeyed, and standing before her godfather, began reverently to repeat the Catechism as far as she knew it, and the hymns she had learnt in the week—not at school, but from Katharine, who found time to give her an hour or two of lessons every day, and paid the money for Kezia to go to school, instead of her. Willie's schooling, too, often came out of John's pocket.

'There's Katie's step, I'm sure!' cried Willie, starting up from the stool on which he was sitting by the fire, just after putting away the Bible, in which he and Kezia had been reading to Charles; and flying to the door, he threw it open, and caught hold of her, almost throwing the cup and plate out of her hand.

'Take care, Willie,' she said. 'Now carry them in for me, and see if you can't persuade Kizzy to eat something.'

'Oh, we've had our tea,' he replied.

'Yes; but how much did you eat, my child?' she said, speaking to Kezia, who had also risen and taken her sister's hand.

'Nothing at all,' said Charles. 'I told her she would never grow fat if she did not eat more.'

Katharine looked at her thin hand with pity and sorrow, while she uncovered the cake, and set the cup of tea before her.

'My tea will be better than yours,' she said; 'now try and take something.'

'May I give Willie a bit of the cake?' she asked in a whisper. 'I don't like eating it all by myself.'

'I dare say Willie did very well at tea; but just

as you like,' she said, 'only take what you can yourself.'

'Father's very bad,' said Charles. 'I'm glad you've come in, Kate. Won't you go up and see him?'

'Yes, that's what I came in for,' and Katharine laid aside her shawl, and went up-stairs.

She found Helen sitting by her father's bed, while he lay groaning, and every now and then uttering words of anger and cursing.

'Can't you keep that light out of my eyes, Helen?' she heard him say. 'Oh, my head! my head!'

Helen drew the curtain so as to shade the light from him by which she was reading her Bible, as Katharine entered. Helen's eyes brightened as she saw her sister, while she said,

'Here's Katharine, Father.'

'Well, Katharine can't do me any good. If she could take this pain out of my head, it would be worth her coming.'

'Is it very bad?' asked Katharine.

'Bad! I should think it is; and, I say, Katharine, I will have some beer; I'm dying of thirst; I know it would do me good; it would put me to sleep; and I will have it. I've told Helen twenty times to get it, and she won't stir,' finishing his sentence with awful words not to be repeated.

'Father,' said Katharine, 'you know what the doctor said. Helen dare not get it for you. It might kill you to take it. Won't you have some tea instead?'

More awful words followed, and the two daughters stood by, holding each other's hand, trembling. At length the sick man exhausted himself, and lay still without being able to say more.

'I've never seen him so bad,' said Katharine in a whisper, moving away from the bed; 'has the doctor seen him to-day?'

'Yes, this afternoon,' was the whispered reply. He said again, anything like beer or spirits might kill him, and yet he asks for it constantly !'

'He hardly knows what he says sometimes, I think,' said Katharine; 'did not you notice how wild his eyes looked, and how he put his hand to his head?'

'The doctor said he thought the fever would go to his head. I don't know what he called it, but Father had not complained then as he has done since.'

The two sisters went on talking for a little while, and then Katharine took her leave, promising to be with Helen by three o'clock in the morning, and set her at liberty to take some rest; for they both saw that their father was not fit to be left alone.

The truth was, that his illness was ending in brain fever, and thus the guilty man was in danger of being called to render an account of all his works, whether good or evil, without the possibility of repentance.

Miss Walton now shut up the book, saying she had read enough for one day, and dismissed the girls.

LESSON LXXVI.

THE SACRAMENTS.

‘THE THING SIGNIFIED’ IN THE LORD’S SUPPER.

THE Sunday after Miss Walton had sent Harri away, the class was again assembled in the Vicar’s parlour; but in the meantime, Miss Walton had been thinking over the subject, and felt that she must now come to a part of the Catechism upon which was not fitting to question all her class, even if they were attentive and reverent, but only those who were either communicants, or of an age to be thinking of it, and preparing to be so. As soon, therefore, as she had heard the whole class say through the Catechism, and had asked a few general questions, she said,

‘Girls, I do not wish to question you all, over this part of the Catechism; those, therefore, who are not communicants, may walk in the garden until I call you; unless any of you elder girls above fourteen wish to stay,’ she added, noticing Mary’s look of disappointment.

The younger girls all rose, and among them Bessie and Alice, and Jane, but Mary hesitated, and then said,

‘Please, Ma’am, may I stay?’

‘Yes, Mary, you may,’ returned Miss Walton, and then she noticed Jane also linger, and presently said,

‘And may I?’

Miss Walton thought and hoped there was

change for the better in Jane since her illness, and, therefore, to her also she replied,

‘Yes, if you *wish* it, Jane.’

The others by this time had separated about the garden, and with her little band around her of those who, Miss Walton trusted, might be called faithful, she went on with her lesson.

And I give this lesson, which was more of a conversation than usual, for those who are either communicants, or are wishing to be, and preparing themselves by thought and prayer—for those who will approach the subject with humble and reverent minds.

‘What is the outward sign of the Lord’s Supper?’ asked Miss Walton.

All. ‘Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.’

Miss W. And ‘What is the inward part or thing signified,’ Anna?

Anna. ‘The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper.’

Miss W. What, then, is the means of receiving Christ’s Body?

Margaret. The bread in the Lord’s Supper.

Miss W. And what is the means of receiving His Blood?

Several. The wine in the Lord’s Supper.

Miss W. Then in taking and eating the bread and wine, we take and eat—what?

Anna. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. And Who has given His Body and Blood thus to be our food and drink?

Several. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. Then from Whom do we take and receive them?

Emily. From Christ.

Miss W. But by whose instrumentality?

‘The clergyman’s,’ said Margaret, doubtfully.

Miss W. Yes; as when our Lord fed the five thousand with the barley loaves, who distributed the bread to the multitude?

Mary. The disciples.

Miss W. But Who really gave it?

Several. Christ.

Miss W. So now we take the bread and wine from the hand of the minister, but Who really gives His Body and Blood?

All. Christ Himself.

Miss W. Yes; and we should receive that precious Food from Him, as His gift. Living in the wilderness of this world, we should faint by the way, but not He in mercy provided food for us, that Bread which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world, and which He multiplies to feed a who come to Him hungry and thirsty, and in faith For, by Whom alone does the Catechism teach us the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken?

Sarah. The faithful.

Miss W. What do you mean by ‘verily’?

Margaret. Truly.

Miss W. Yes; they are truly and indeed taken only by—whom?

All. The faithful.

Miss W. And the faithful are those who receive with—what?

‘Faith,’ said one or two.

Miss W. Yes; who believe that in eating the bread they verily receive—?

‘Christ’s Body,’ said Emily.

Miss W. And that, in drinking of that wine, the verily and indeed receive—?

‘Christ’s Blood,’ they replied.

Miss W. Those who thus believe, go in faith ‘According to your faith, be it unto you,’ was

our Saviour’s rule while upon earth; and still, therefore, we are taught that the blessing is only for—whom?

All. The faithful.

Miss W. For those who go in faith. Look at 1 Cor. xi. 29.

Anna. ‘He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning the Lord’s Body.*’

Miss W. What do you mean by ‘discerning’?

‘Seeing,’ said Anna.

Miss W. And how alone can we see the Lord’s Body in the Holy Supper?

Mary. By faith.

Miss W. Yes; which St. Paul tells us is the evidence of things *not seen*; that which makes us see things invisible. What, then, did the eating and drinking unworthily, or in an improper manner, prove?

Several. Want of faith.

Miss W. Yes; if they had had faith to discern the Lord’s Body, they would not have dared to eat and drink in the unworthy, improper manner in which they did, and which St. Paul tells us is—what?

Emily. Eating and drinking damnation to ourselves.

Miss W. Or condemnation, punishment. For how does the next verse go on?

Jane. ‘For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.’ (Verse 30.)

Miss W. Yes; they brought punishment upon themselves. He that has not faith to discern the Lord’s Body, (but looks upon the bread as common food,) does not receive It, but goes away from the Feast weak and sickly as he went—brings upon him *his own condemnation*. Our Blessed Lord Himself taught us the necessity of faith, to receive His Body

and Blood, in His wonderful discourse in the sixth chapter of St. John, to which you may turn, girl and read from the 27th to the 59th verse.

The girls did so; and then, with their Bibles still in their hands, Miss Walton asked,

‘What meat did Christ bid the Jews labour for?’

Sarah. ‘That meat which endureth unto everlasting life.’

Miss W. And Who did He say would give that meat?

Several. ‘The Son of Man.’ (Verse 27.)

Miss W. Then the Jews asked *how* they should labour or work for it, and what did Christ answer? (Verse 28.)

Margaret. ‘This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent.’ (Verse 29.)

Miss W. Then *Faith* was the work required. But what did they ask for before they would believe?

Mary. ‘A sign.’ (Verse 30.)

Miss W. And what sign did they say Moses had given? What had their fathers eaten in the desert?

All. Manna.

Miss W. Yes. Which they called bread from heaven, and which they seemed to suppose had been given by Moses, and was his sign to prove his authority. But what did our Saviour answer?

Emily. ‘Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.’ (Verse 32.)

Miss W. And that true bread, He taught, would give life. Then, when they asked, ‘Lord, evermore give us this bread,’ He proclaimed what that bread was,—in what words?

Emily. ‘I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.’ (Verse 35.)

Miss W. What, then, did He still show to be necessary to receive that bread?

Margaret. Faith.

Miss W. Yes; come to Me, and *believe*, and you shall receive that bread, and shall ‘hunger no more, neither thirst any more.’ But this the Jews would not do, and Christ goes on to say—?

Sarah. ‘Ye also have seen Me, and *believe not.*’ (Verse 36.)

Miss W. They had the sign they asked for, bread from heaven—true bread, really from heaven, (not like the manna, unsatisfying, and only apparently from heaven,) and yet they lost all the blessing, because they would not believe. Again, in verse 40, more plainly still, He points to Himself as the Object of their faith, the true Bread of Life. Read it, Mary.

Mary. ‘This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and *believeth on Him*, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.’

Miss W. Thus He showed it was spiritual life of which He was speaking, spiritual bread which He was declaring Himself to be, and that His words were not to be carnally understood. And how did the Jews take His words?

Several. They murmured. (Verse 41.)

Miss W. Yet our Blessed Lord withdrew not His words, but only tried to impress them more deeply, and to make His meaning more and more plain. What does He say again in verses 47 and 48?

Margaret. ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that *believeth on Me* hath everlasting life. I am that Bread of Life.’

Miss W. Faith, then, is necessary—Faith in Christ as the Bread of Life, (that is, the bread that supports life.) It has been said, that ‘when our Lord is called *The Living Bread*, it seems to be

taught that He hath the principle of life in Himself: when the *Bread of Life*—as here—that in Him is vested the lofty privilege of conveying the gift of life to others.' And now He declares Himself as the Bread of Life to all who believe. But one step further our Saviour now leads us. What had been the end of those who had eaten manna?

Several. They were dead. (Verse 49.)

Miss W. But what does He say of Himself, the True Bread from heaven?

Anna. 'A man may eat thereof, and not die.' (Verse 50.)

Miss W. And this is the first time our Lord mentions the *eating* of the True Bread, in order to life; and then He goes on to explain that He would indeed provide this heavenly bread for man to eat; that He did not only declare Himself to be the Bread of Life, and leave it out of man's power to eat thereof, and live, but that the way of eating should be provided. Now read verse 51.

Jane. 'I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.'

Miss W. And when the Jews strove among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?' what did He further say?

All. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise Him up at the last day. For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed.' (Verse 53-55.)

Miss W. Thus our Blessed Lord has led us on step by step, till He has taught us that, believing on Him as the Bread of Life, we must eat His Flesh, and drink His Blood, in order that life may be im-

parted to us also : that we must not only acknowledge that He is the Bread of Life, and *look* upon Him, but take and eat Him. The tree of life stood in the garden of Eden ; but after man was driven out, did it avail him ? Could he take and eat ?

Several. No. God ‘placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.’

Miss W. Yes, lest he should put forth his hand, and take, and eat, and live for ever. Then, in order for the tree of life to *give* life, what must man do ?

Mary. Put forth his hand, and take, and eat.

Miss W. Yes ; not merely believe that it could give life, but eat of it. ‘So our Lord taught us, that to live by Him, the Bread of Life, what must we do ?

Margaret. Eat His Flesh, and drink His Blood.

Miss W. Yes ; and to make this quite plain, He not only says, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you ;’ but also gives the promise, ‘Whoso eateth and drinketh . . . hath’—what, girls ?

All. ‘Eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day.’

Miss W. Without eating His Flesh, and drinking His Blood, He says we have *no life* ; by doing so, we have eternal life ; for He is the Bread of Life, having Life in Himself, and giving Life to all who, with faith, take and eat. But, as we have seen all through this chapter, Faith is necessary.* Faith is the work we must perform to obtain this heavenly food ; and therefore the Catechism teaches us that the Body and Blood of Christ are taken and received—by whom ?

All. ‘The faithful in the Lord’s Supper.’

* See Plain Commentary on St. John vi.

Miss W. And now, when was it that our Lord fully explained *how* we could eat His Flesh, and drink His Blood, which He here taught was necessary to eternal life?

Margaret. When He instituted the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. He had said, 'Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man . . . ye have no life in you;' afterwards, 'He took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and said, Take, eat—'?

'This is My Body,' continued Emily.

Miss W. And He had said, 'Except ye drink the Blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you;' and afterwards 'He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it, saying, Drink ye all of it, for—'?

'This is My Blood,' they said again.

Miss W. Yes; 'Eat the bread, for it is My Body; drink the wine, for it is My Blood; and except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you; but whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise Him up at the last day.' Well, then, does the Church teach her children to say that bread and wine, the outward sign of the Lord's Supper, signify—what?

All. 'The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.'

Miss W. Yes; and well has she taught her ministers, in giving the bread, to say—what, Sarah?

Sarah. 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.'

Miss W. By faith, then, on Whom must we feed?

Margaret. Christ.

Miss W. Yes; in eating the bread, by faith, we

must feed on His Body, which is 'meat indeed'. It is not the bread upon which we are to fix our minds, but by faith we are to see the Body of Christ. It is not upon the bread that our souls are to feed, but upon Him Who is the true Living Bread, which came down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. And what is said in giving the wine, Emily?

Emily. 'The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.'

Miss W. It is, then, the Blood of Christ, which is drink indeed, of which we must partake by faith, in remembrance of Christ's Blood shed for us—shed, in order that all our sins might be pardoned; that we might wash our robes and make them white in the Blood of the Lamb, and hereafter stand before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And Who will be with those thus cleansed?

Mary. 'He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.' (Rev. vii. 14-17.)

Miss W. That we may be fed hereafter, let us go with faith, humility, and thankfulness, to be fed now. If we would drink of these fountains of living water hereafter, let us now drink, by faith, of that Blood which has been provided to be 'drink indeed,' unto everlasting life.

After a short pause Miss Walton said, 'Mary, you may call the party in the garden now, if they want to hear more of the story.' While she was gone, Miss Walton said, as she turned over the leaves, 'I

do not think it will have much to do with our lesson to-day, but it will interest you, I dare say.'

'Oh, yes, Ma'am,' said Emily. 'I'm so glad poor Katharine was married; she deserved it after all she had gone through.'

'Peace often comes after a storm,' said Miss Walton; 'however, it seems as if Katharine did not take her fill of rest even then, but still shared in the troubles of home.'

'I've had such a run to find them all,' said Mary, coming into the room again, followed by the rest; 'they were scattered all over.'

'Your run has given you rosy cheeks, Mary,' said Miss Walton. 'Make haste, girls, and take your seats.'

THE ELDER SISTER. (*Continued.*)

It was about a week from the time that Fenning's illness turned to brain fever, when the elder members of his family were gathered round his bed, expecting his death every moment. The sight was too harassing for the little ones, and Kezia and Willie had been sent to join Martha at Katharine's house. They knew their father was dying, and even Willie was subdued, and Katharine, therefore, trusted the children together.

Charles had written for James, and he, too, stood watching his father's end.

How different had been the scene at the mother's death-bed! Then all had been peace—rest in the Lord. Katharine and Charles (young as he then was) had both felt that death was to her the entrance to life eternal—that she was but passing away from the life mortal to the life immortal, through Him Who is our life. Her end had been so sudden after little Martha's birth, that there was not time to receive the Holy Communion, but already her soul had

fed upon the True Bread of Christ's Body, and drunk His Blood, and though her body was dying, her soul lived by Him, and she was supported even through the valley of the shadow of death.

Now there was nothing but groans and weeping.

James even felt the difference, for though only ten years old at the time, he well remembered his mother's death. He remembered her low words of blessing; and then that all was still, till Katharine had taken his hand, and led him away, and told him his mother had gone to Heaven. Now he saw his father's sunken eye, wild looks, heaving breast, and heard his wandering words, not of peace and hope, but of agony and dread.

The poor man had, indeed, quite lost his senses for some days, and though he was not now as violent as he had been, he was incapable of offering one prayer for mercy. Mr. Benson and his children did what they could; they knelt around his bed, and offered up prayers for him, but oh! how dark was the prospect! Almost the last sensible words he had spoken had been sinful words; and now, with all the weight of guilt upon him, he was about to meet his Judge!

It was when Mr. Benson thought almost the last moment had come, that a youth, ragged and bare-foot, came up to the garden gate with stealthy steps. He looked about him, first at the windows, then round the little plot of garden ground, and saw nobody. He entered the gate, and coming up to the door, knocked gently, while his knees quite trembled under him, but none heard the knock; and, as if unable to restrain himself, he opened the door. All was empty; and as he entered and looked around, tears came into his eyes, which he did not take the trouble even to wipe away. Suddenly, however, he heard the sound of voices from up-stairs. Very gently he opened the door at the foot of the staircase, and the words came plainly to him,

‘We humbly commend the soul of this Thy servant, our dear brother, into Thy hands, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour; most humbly beseeching Thee, that it may be precious in Thy sight. Wash it, we pray Thee, in the blood of that Immaculate Lamb, that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh, or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before Thee.’

He listened attentively for a moment. Once before, at his mother’s death, he had heard those words; and now, faint and trembling, he sank on the lower step, and covering his face with his hands, scalding tears began to fall.

Who was dying?

Was it Katharine? No; Mr. Benson had said ‘dear brother.’

Was it Charles, then? or—

Was it his Father? and Richard, for it was none but he, shuddered at the thought of its being too late to ask forgiveness. His impulse was to dash up-stairs and know the worst, and yet he durst not.

The prayer was finished, and in the stillness that followed, Richard’s sobs were heard by those around the bed of death. They looked one upon another, and then Mr. Benson left the room to see what was the matter.

‘Who and what are you?’ he asked with surprise on reaching the stairs, and perceiving Richard below.

Richard quickly raised his head, exclaiming, ‘Is it Father?’

‘What do you mean, young man?’ asked Mr. Benson, forgetting at the moment the existence of Richard, and thinking that the youth before him

must be out of his mind; 'I think you are making some mistake.'

'Oh! you don't know me, Mr. Benson,' he replied; 'I am Richard. Is it Father that is dying? Am I too late to ask him to forgive me? for I have hated him.' And Richard again covered his face with his hands, waiting for the answer.

'I am Richard.' These words were caught by Charles—passed on to Katharine, and, in five minutes afterwards, the unhappy youth was kneeling at his father's bed, saying,

'Oh, Father! speak to me! say you forgive me! and take away your curse!' but no answer came.

The sick man looked about wildly; new strength seemed for the moment to be given him; he tossed from side to side, and stretched out his hands as if feeling for something. Richard caught and held his hand—the hand that had struck him, and again spoke in earnest words. This time it seemed as if they reached the understanding of the dying man; he violently withdrew his hand; but, in another moment, he laid it on the sunken head of his son, tried to speak, and fell back, no more to rise in life.

It was a few hours afterwards, (Katharine and Helen having performed the last sad office for their father's lifeless body, and the children having gone to bed,) when the party were once more met together. John had come in from his work and joined them, and a neighbour had kindly offered to stay with the children, who, for the night, were sleeping at Katharine's house. They did not like all to go *there*; they felt as if it would be neglect to leave the poor body alone in the house, and so they assembled in the kitchen below. Poor Richard, now dressed in some of Charles's and John's clothes, sat among them, and began to tell some of the things which had befallen him during the seven years of his absence. He was still subdued and sorrowful, for

he had had a lesson, the effect of which ought to have appeared in his whole after life.

'John,' he said, 'you told me I should never thrive if I went away in anger with poor Father; but I didn't believe you then; yet, somehow, your words seem to have come true.'

'Your anger has gone now, and perhaps things will be better,' said Katharine; for Richard spoke in a tone of great despondency.

'If he *could* have spoken,' said Richard.

'Yes; but he gave you a token of forgiveness,' said Helen.

They were all silent for a moment, and then Charles said, 'Well, Richard, go on, and tell us what you have done.'

He roused himself, and continued,

'My voyage out was good enough; and I liked the sea, and made up my mind I'd be a sailor; but about a week before we got to land, the scurvy broke out among us, and I was the worst. When we reached Cape Town, I was taken to the hospital, and there I was for many a week, bad enough.'

'Then it was you began to think my words would be true, Dick,' said John.

'Aye, they used to come to me often enough, but I didn't believe them yet; and in time I got better; but instead of going to sea again, I hired myself for a servant to a gentleman. There I was comfortable enough, and thought I was doing very well, and that I would write to Katie as soon as ever I got some money saved to send her, for I always intended to pay back what you and Charles gave me.'

'You needn't have thought of that,' they both exclaimed.

'Well! I know I was welcome to it; but that was the very reason I wanted to pay it back, and send you some besides. I thought it ought to have come from poor Father's pocket, not yours.'

'Poor Father' he said now, but at the time when he thought this, no kindly feelings were entertained; only bitter anger and hatred.

'But my good fortune didn't last long,' continued Richard; 'my master suddenly died, and I had to look out for something else to do. My little savings were soon gone, and I was glad to get employment minding cattle, and then a hard life I had of it. For weeks together I seldom slept in a house, but either under a cart, or shed, or wherever I could find shelter.'

'And why didn't you write all this time?' asked Katharine.

Richard hesitated, and then said,

'I thought it would punish Father more if he never heard;' and presently added, 'I was only unhappy for your sake, Katie, for I remembered your look that day, and thought of what you had done for me. This work went on for a year or more, and I might have done very well. I was doing very well, and had got some money together again, and I thought I'd begin with some business for myself, when the Kaffir war broke out, and all master's cattle were killed or stolen, and I, in a struggle with the natives, was wounded. I thought my time had come then; but a party of soldiers passing, picked me up, and carried me to the hospital again.'

'And did not things begin to look different to you then?' said Charles.

'Yes, they did,' he replied. 'I began to see I was wrong, and I thought I would write and ask Father to forgive me as soon as I got well.'

'And did you?' asked Katharine, hoping he might have done so, though the letter had never reached them.

'No, Katie,' he replied. 'When I got better, I did not think so much about it; and when I found Father dying, I thought I was punished by coming too late.'

Again the party were silent until John asked, 'What did you do when you got about again?'

'Why, the first thing I did, was to go off to where my old master's farm had been, to see if I could find my savings, which I had hidden in the ground.'

'Well! and did you find them?' asked James.

'No,' said Richard; 'it made me nearly mad. Every fence was burnt and broken down, and the whole place desolate. I had buried them under a great stone by a gate-post; but now stone, post, and everything, was gone, and the house nothing but a mass of blackened stones and burnt wood. I tried place after place, day after day, and couldn't find a shilling.'

'And how much was there?' asked James.

'Why, something like ten pounds,' replied Richard bitterly.

'Poor Richard!' said Katharine, laying her hand on his arm, 'how little we thought how much you were suffering. You ought to have written, and then perhaps we might have helped you.'

'No; I was only more determined than ever not to write. I thought I never would let Father know all I had suffered, or ask him for a penny. I was nearly desperate. I thought of the sea again, for I was tired of land, but I had some difficulty to get a place as a sailor, I was getting too old for it; and for some weeks I lived as best I could, often not knowing where my next meal would come from, and often going without one. At length, however, I got employment in a trading vessel, and there I stayed until I had learnt to be a sailor. Then I got into another vessel which traded with America. Some of our voyages were fortunate, some were not; but we sailors were paid all the same; but I was not happy. Somehow, the thought of you all, and the way I had left you, hung like a stone around my neck, and Richard did not like to say that his wretchedness

and too often led him to drown thought in drink ; he only said,) and, after a time, I got into disgrace with the captain, and he discharged me. Then it was that I found a vessel returning to England, and I thought I would come and see you all, and then go to sea again, and do better.'

'Then you came over on purpose to ask Father's pardon?' said Katharine.

'Not exactly that,' said Richard. 'I thought I would try and see you, and hear how Father thought of me. I wanted to make friends, but I didn't like to do it. I had a little money and all my clothes on board, and I was to work my way home. Our passage was pretty good. We had some rough weather, but I didn't think much of it till we were approaching old England, then came on a storm—'

'I remember it,' said Charles, 'about four days ago.'

'Yes,' said Richard ; 'but the wind blew right on shore, and, somehow or other, we managed to run on the rocks off Beachy Head, and very soon went to pieces.'

'And how did you escape?' they all asked.

'Not easily,' he replied. 'I am a pretty good swimmer. Three times I had just reached the land, and was washed back again ; and if this had happened fourth time, I do not think my strength would have held out.'

'How dreadful!' exclaimed Katharine and Helen, in one breath.

'It was dreadful,' he replied, almost with a quiver ; and after a pause, continued,

'Then it was that I seemed really to feel my father's curse. Oh! it was horrible, and I vowed to ask his pardon if ever I reached the land. I never expected to see you all again.'

'Thank God that He has spared you, Richard!' said Katharine, seriously. 'He has spared you to give you time for repentance and amendment.'

‘Well, I do hope to do better. I know I’ve not thought enough of Him,’ he replied; ‘but’—and then he stopped. He was going to say his life had been so careless, he felt it hopeless to amend, he did not know how he could. It was a pity, perhaps, he did stop; he might have been strengthened and encouraged to begin the work; but as he stopped, none liked to press him to go on, and presently he had returned to his past life, and told them many particulars of interest which it would take too much time to repeat. They sat long into the night, and then separated for rest, but before Katharine returned home, with her husband at her side, she once more stood by the body of her poor father.

It was, however, a trying moment to her, for no thought of comfort came, she could not even pray for him. Too late, too late, seemed to sound in her ears. Life had been offered to the soul, food provided for its nourishment, and all had been rejected, and now she stood by the lifeless body; but the soul, where was it?

‘Leave that in God’s hands,’ said her husband, kindly; ‘He is over all.’

‘Yes, that is my only comfort,’ she replied; ‘and poor Dick. Perhaps he will have learned a lesson he won’t forget.’

‘I trust and think he has,’ said John, and then drew his wife away.

LESSON LXXVII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

THE BENEFITS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

AGAIN Miss Walton felt that her lesson must not be quite general, and yet she did not like that so many in the class should lose their half hour of instruction. In her difficulty, however, Mr. Walton came to her assistance, happening to be in the room just before the class arrived.

'I will take those you do not wish present,' he said, 'into my study. I don't think it will hurt me.'

'Oh! thank you,' replied his sister; 'you must let them read to you, and not talk much.'

Accordingly, when her girls arrived, the younger ones went to Mr. Walton, to their great delight.

'Ah! it's better to be little sometimes, you see,' said Ruth, laughing, as she passed Margaret.

'But I'd rather be here to-day,' she answered; 'so I am glad I'm not little.'

'Oh! you only say so!' was Ruth's laughing reply.

'I suppose,' said Miss Walton, 'you don't want to be called for my story, if I go on with it. You'd rather stay with Mr. Walton.'

Ruth looked a little blank, but Agnes whispered, 'She doesn't mean it.'

'We shall see,' said Miss Walton; 'run away now.'

‘Please, Ma’am, may I stay with you?’ asked Rose.

‘Yes, Rose, if you wish it. Last Sunday, I remember you were not here to have your choice.’

‘No, Ma’am,’ she replied, for it had so happened that Rose was kept at home that day, her mother being very poorly.

And now, with the same party around her as on the Sunday before, except for the addition of Rose, Miss Walton began her lesson.

‘What did we see, last Sunday, was received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper?’ she asked.

Several. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. And what are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?

Emily. ‘The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.’

Miss W. How are our souls strengthened and refreshed?

Anna. By the Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Received—how?

Margaret. By eating the bread, and drinking the wine of the Lord’s Supper, in faith.

Miss W. By receiving Christ’s blessed Body and Blood, we are partakers of how many benefits?

Several. Two.

Miss W. Yes. What are they? First—?

‘The strengthening of our souls,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Yes; and secondly—?

‘The refreshing of our souls,’ answered several.

Miss W. In the same manner, we are taught, ‘as’—what?

Sarah. ‘Our bodies are by the bread and wine.’

Miss W. Yes. Look at Psalm civ. 14, 15.

Jane. ‘He bringeth forth . . . green herb for the service of men; that He may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man . . . and bread to strengthen man’s heart.’

Miss W. For what, then, is bread?

Several. To strengthen.

Miss W. And what does the Lord's Body do—the Bread of Life?

Margaret. Strengthens our souls.

Miss W. And what does David say wine does for us?

Mary. Makes us glad.

Miss W. Yes; or—what might be said?

Rose. Refreshes us.

Miss W. And what does the Blood of Christ do for the soul?

Anna. Refreshes it.

Miss W. And the Catechism teaches us, that *as* our bodies are strengthened and refreshed by bread and wine, *so* our souls are by Christ's Body and Blood. That is, the one may fitly represent or typify the other, and we may look for it to work in us in the same manner. Now can you tell me how bread and wine strengthen and refresh our bodies? First, is it sufficient to look upon them, in order that they should work in us?

Rose. No; we must eat and drink them.

Miss W. So, in order that our souls may be strengthened and refreshed by Christ's Body and Blood, what must we do?

Emily. Eat and drink them.

Miss W. How?

Rose. Spiritually.

Miss W. And what is the means whereby we spiritually eat and drink Christ's Body and Blood? Look at the xxviiith Article.

Margaret. 'The mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith.'

Miss W. Yes; and therefore it is that our souls, or spirits, are nourished and refreshed; because, by faith we receive Him into our inmost being Who is the very Life itself. For, secondly, by eating and

drinking bread and wine, what is supported, nourished?

‘Our bodies,’ said some.

Miss W. Yes; but what is kept in our bodies? What would leave them if we did not eat and drink?

Several. The life.

Miss W. Very good. Food and drink, then, are for the support of—?

‘Life,’ they now replied.

Miss W. Yes, natural life. So what is supported and nourished by the Food of Christ’s Body and Blood?

Margaret. Our spiritual life.

Miss W. What words of our Saviour’s tell us this?

Sarah. ‘As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.’ (St. John, vi. 57.)

Miss W. Yes. And again. As our food and drink become part of ourselves, so what does our Lord teach us is the consequence of eating and drinking His Body and Blood? Look at St. John, vi. 56.

Mary. ‘He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.’

Miss W. Christ gives Himself to be One with us, and permits us to be one with Him by our eating and drinking of His Body and Blood. It is a great mystery, girls, and far beyond our understanding. We can but believe and adore. Yet, even as a mystery, the type is fitting, for we cannot understand how and why our natural life is supported, and strengthened, and refreshed by common food; so it must ever be a mystery how Christ gives Himself to us in the Lord’s Supper, for the life, strength, and support of the soul. We know that common food, taken and eaten, becomes part of ourselves; so, by spiritually eating and drinking Christ’s Body and Blood, we become—?

‘One with Him, and He with us,’ said Anna.

Miss W. And as we know that food, having become a part of ourselves, our natural life, the life of the body, is supported and preserved, and we grow and strengthen; so we know that, by the Food of the most blessed Body and Blood of Christ, our spiritual life is sustained, and our souls are—?

‘Strengthened and refreshed,’ said Sarah.

Miss W. Thus much we know, but further we must not inquire, lest, by a too curious spirit, we sin against God. We must be thankful for the light He has given us, and strive to use it to a due discerning of the Lord's Body; and by giving us the sign of bread and wine, He has helped our understanding; for as we can, in a measure, understand how bread and wine strengthen and refresh the body, so, in like manner, we may, in a measure, understand, or if not understand, yet believe—what, girls?

Several. That our souls are strengthened and refreshed by the Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. To Whom do both Sacraments unite us?

Several. Christ.

Miss W. Yes; by Baptism what were we made?

Mary. Members of Christ.

Miss W. And what life was then given to us?

Rose. Our spiritual life.

Miss W. Yes, or life of God's Spirit within us. We were new-born of—?

Several. Water and the Spirit.

Miss W. And that because we were united to Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and—?

‘The Life,’ they all continued. (St. John, xiv. 6.)

Miss W. United to Him, the Spirit of God, took up His abode within us. In Christ we have life. Do you not remember what St. John says of this?

Margaret. ‘God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son,’

hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.' (1 St. John, v. 11, 12.)

Miss W. But as a new-born infant requires food to nourish it in life, that it may grow and strengthen so what do we require after our new birth?

Emily. Food to nourish our souls in life.

Miss W. Yes. Each time we eat and drink, we receive, as it were, new life; our natural life is renewed; so each time we eat and drink the Lord's Body and Blood, we receive new life to what?

Several. Our souls.

Miss W. Yes. Spiritual life is renewed, because Christ, Who is our Life—without Whom the soul is dead—gives Himself to us, makes Himself one with us, and us with Him—gives of His Life to us, of His strength to our weakness. Look at the second prayer appointed to be said after the Lord's Prayer in the Communion Service. For what do we thank God?

Jane. 'For that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious Death and Passion of Thy dear Son.'

Miss W. By God's thus feeding us with the spiritual food of Christ's Body and Blood, what are assured to us?

Several. God's favour and goodness.

Miss W. What else?

Rose. That we are members incorporate in Christ's Body.

Miss W. That is, that we are members united

Christ's Body. And what are we, in the third place, assured thereby?

Anna. That we are heirs, through hope, of God's everlasting kingdom.

Miss W. And how are we thus assured?

Margaret. By receiving from God the spiritual food of Christ's Body and Blood.

Miss W. All these blessings are secured to us—God's favour, union with Christ, and eternal life hereafter; for 'he that hath the Son, hath life;' and Christ has promised, 'he that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood'—?

'Dwelleth in Me, and I in him,' said Rose.

Miss W. And thus is our soul strengthened—thus we are nourished and grow unto life eternal. And why do we need strengthening to our souls?

'Because we are weak,' said Emily.

'Because we have enemies,' said Mary, 'to fight against.'

Miss W. Quite true. We have powerful enemies which must be overcome, and we are in ourselves weak, therefore we need that our souls should be—?

'Strengthened,' they all replied.

Miss W. And what is it that so continually weakens our souls?

Margaret. Sin.

Miss W. It weakens, and (unless we are delivered from its power) must, in the end, destroy our spiritual life. And Who alone can deliver us?

Mary. Christ our Saviour.

Miss W. Yes, He Who came to save His people from their sins. And He saves us by delivering us from the power of sin and Satan, by enabling us to overcome, or giving us—what, girls?

'Strength,' said Rose.

Miss W. Supposing two travellers are attacked by robbers, the one weak and faint for want of food, the other having renewed his strength, and refreshed

himself by eating and drinking, which would be most likely to resist the robbers and overcome?

Several. The strong man.

Miss W. Yes, indeed; little chance would he have who, weak and faint, was scarcely able to drag himself along; so we can have but little chance of victory over our spiritual enemies, if we go in our own weakness to the battle, refusing the spiritual food and drink prepared for—what?

All. 'The strengthening and refreshing of our souls.'

Miss W. And why do our souls need refreshing as well as strength? After a severe battle, how must the soldier feel?

'Tired,' said some. 'Faint,' said others.

Miss W. Yes; and if he has been conquered in the strife—if his enemy has had the victory, how must he feel as well as tired?

'Down-hearted,' said Margaret.

'Discouraged,' said Rose.

Miss W. Right. What, then, does he need to begin the battle again?

Mary. To be refreshed.

Miss W. True; his spirits raised again, his courage renewed, that he may return to the strife with fresh energy. Now can you tell me how David expresses this down-heartedness—this weariness in the battle with sin?

Margaret. 'I am weary of my groaning; every night wash I my bed, and water my couch with my tears. My beauty is gone for very trouble, and worn away because of all mine enemies.' (Psalm vi. 6, 7.)

Miss W. Yes; and again in Psalm xxxviii. 8 and 10.

Anna. 'I am feeble and sore smitten: I have roared for the very disquietness of my heart. . . . My heart panteth, my strength hath failed me: and the light of mine eyes is gone from me.'

Miss W. And in another Psalm he questions with himself upon the cause of this down-heartedness. Look at Psalm xlii. 6.

Jane. 'Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me?'

Miss W. Thus he describes the weariness of our struggle with sin, our faint-heartedness and disquietude; but are we left without a remedy? Whom has Christ so especially invited to come to Him?

Sarah. 'Come unto Me all that travail, (or labour,) and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.' (See Communion Service.)

Miss W. The very thing we want, *that* He promises. What is it?

Emily. Refreshing.

Miss W. 'I will refresh you,' He says. And how will He refresh us?

Margaret. By His own Body and Blood.

Miss W. Yes, which we may take and eat, not only for the strengthening, but for the refreshing of our souls. But you say a man is most cast down if he falls in the conflict. Do we not often fall?

All. Yes, Ma'am, whenever we sin.

Miss W. Then what weight is upon us which oppresses us?

Rose. The weight of guilt.

Miss W. Yes; that which we say in the Confession in the Communion Service is—what, Anna?

'Intolerable,' she replied.

Miss W. That is, more than we can bear. We cannot ourselves bear the weight of guilt which sin brings upon us. It would sink us into hell; therefore, upon Whom must we lay the burden?

Mary. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. And having done this at the Holy Communion by *confession* and entreaties for pardon, *what is provided to refresh us for a new effort?*

Several. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Just so; we pray that we may so eat the Flesh of Jesus Christ, and drink His Blood, that—?

‘Our sinful’ bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood,’ continued Emily.

Miss W. And our souls thus washed, what is removed from us?

Rose. The burden of guilt.

Miss W. And thus our souls are refreshed, and we can go on our way rejoicing; for ‘wine maketh glad the heart of man,’ much more that heavenly wine, the Blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. Is, then, our weakness, or are even our falls which dishearten us, any reason why we should stay away from the Lord’s Supper?

‘No, the reason why we should go,’ said Margaret, in a low tone.

Miss W. Yes, if we do not wilfully choose sin. If our souls are weak, and our enemies powerful, we have the more need of—what?

‘Strength,’ said one or two.

Miss W. If we are disheartened and weary, and heavy laden by reason of sin, we have the more need of—?

‘Refreshing,’ they said again.

Miss W. Our Blessed Lord seemed to teach us this by the parable of the Good Samaritan. When was his help most required by the poor traveller?

Several. When he fell among the thieves. (See St. Luke x. 30–35.)

Miss W. How is his state described by our Blessed Lord? What did the thieves do?

Jane. ‘Stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.’

Miss W. What a description of the state in which our spiritual enemies leave us!—stripped of all righteousness, wounded by sin, so that our spiritual life is well nigh quenched; half dead we lie, unable (in

our weakness and faintness) to help ourselves. But Who can come to the rescue?

Mary. The Good Samaritan.

‘Jesus Christ,’ said others.

Miss W. Would it have been wise of the wounded man had he said, ‘Don’t help me, for I am too weak to help myself—don’t bind up my wounds, for I cannot bind them myself—don’t you restore life, for I must die if left to myself?’

‘No,’ said Emily; ‘it was because he could not do it himself, that he so much needed that it should be done for him.’

Miss W. True; yet this is what those do who, because they are weak, will not seek, in Christ’s appointed way, for strength; because they are wounded with sin, they will not let Him bind them up; because they are half dead, they will not seek to Him for strength and refreshment, that their life may be renewed. And now, what did the Good Samaritan do?

Sarah. ‘He had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.’

Miss W. And when he went away, did he leave any direction?

Mary. Yes. ‘On the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.’

Miss W. So our Blessed Lord, having poured out His own Blood—the wine—to heal our wounds, has left with His ministers food and drink for our perfect restoration; only let us not turn away from the offered mercy, but thankfully, and with faith, eat His Flesh, and drink His Blood, for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls.

(After a moment's silence Miss Walton continued,) A few more words I would say, girls, and then I must stop the lesson. Will once or twice eating and drinking in all our lives preserve our bodies in health and strength?

All. No; we must eat and drink every day.

Miss W. Yes; at stated times we must take our necessary food; and if we miss doing so, we feel weak and hungry; so, is it enough, once or twice in our lives, to draw near to the Lord's Supper?

'No,' said Margaret; 'we should always go.'

Miss W. Indeed we ought; as for the health and strength of our bodies we should take regular meals, so, if we expect our souls to be in health and strength, we must regularly take and eat the Food and Drink prepared for them. It is a fearful error to think that if we receive the Holy Communion just before we die, it is enough; it is like starving a person until life is nearly gone, and then offering him food. It *might*, indeed, strengthen and revive him, but most likely it would be too late. It is while the body has to work, and the duties of life have to be done, that food and drink are most required; and it is while our souls have to fight against sin, the world, and the devil, that they most of all need that spiritual sustenance which will strengthen and refresh them for their labour. After this life has passed, there will be no more struggle; we shall either *have* conquered, or *be* conquered. It is dangerous, therefore, most dangerous, to put off till sickness, and the approach of death, the receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour. It should be the first act of every confirmed Christian. And from that time, what should we do when invited to the Feast of the Gospel?

Several. Always go.

Miss W. Yes; why?

Margaret. Because our souls cannot live and thrive without it.

Miss W. And we need strengthening and refreshing most of all,—when?

Mary. When we have our work to do.

Miss W. Yes, and our conflict to go through. And must our weakness and failures keep us away?

Emily. No, make us go oftener.

Miss W. Yes, if we do not fail wilfully, just as a weak and sickly person requires food and wine oftener than one in perfect health and strength. And lastly, girls, as ordinary food strengthens and refreshes our bodies, for the most part, insensibly, and, by degrees, so we believe the spiritual food works in the soul. I will read you a few lines about this, which will make it plain.

‘We eat and drink every day, and by that means our bodies grow to their full stature, and are then kept up in life, health, and vigour, though we ourselves know not how this is done, or perhaps take any notice of it. So it is with this spiritual meat and drink, which God hath prepared for our souls. By eating and drinking frequently of it, we grow by degrees in grace, and in “the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” and still continue stedfast and active in the true faith and fear of God, though, after all, we may be no way sensible how this wonderful effect is wrought in us, but only as we find it to be so by our own experience.*’ We must not look for a visible miracle, as it were, to be wrought upon us, each time we go to the Holy Communion, (continued Miss Walton,) for the Lord’s Supper is not a charm, but we must look for nourishment, strengthening and refreshing, which will come by degrees, and perhaps insensibly; enabling us, when the struggle comes, to fight manfully; and in our journey through this world, to run and not be weary, to walk and not

* See ‘Steps to the Altar.’ Meditation iv. Appendix ii.

faint. If God bestows more than this, as He sometimes does, we must receive it with humility and thankfulness; but we must not be discouraged, and think we receive no benefit, if we do not feel *at the time* any very sensible strengthening and refreshing, for He deals not with all alike, not even with ourselves always in the same way. When the multitude followed Christ into the wilderness, how did He feed them?

Rose. By a miracle.

Miss W. But when He and His disciples wanted bread as they passed through Samaria, did He work a miracle to satisfy them?

Mary. No, they went into the city to buy bread.

Miss W. Yet, in both instances, the food came from Him. So He may sometimes in the Holy Communion give us extraordinary, at other times only ordinary, strength and refreshing as He sees best for us.

‘Please, Ma’am, may I call the other maidens?’ asked Emily, on Miss Walton’s closing her books, as if she had done.

She looked at her watch, and replied, ‘Yes, I think there is time for a little reading.’

When Emily opened the study door she found all the girls busy looking at pictures, which Mr. Walton every now-and-then explained to them, as he sat in his arm chair looking on. They put them, however, to one side, when Emily told them Miss Walton was ready for the reading, and with a ‘Thank you, Sir,’ from most of them, left the study, and joined the elder maidens.

THE ELDER SISTER. (*Continued.*)

JAMES’s master had given him leave of absence for a week, but now that his father was dead, James had

written to ask leave to stay over the funeral, which could not be in the week.

Katharine had been a good deal pained by, as she thought, James's avoidance of her. He appeared to shun being alone with her, and there was something in his manner which made her think he was ill at ease with himself. Then about writing to ask leave she had been annoyed, for it had been hard work to persuade him to do it. He wanted to stay without.

'Of course,' he said, 'Master couldn't expect me to go back before the funeral: what's the use of writing?'

'The use is, that it's the right thing to do,' said John. 'Your time is not your own, it belongs to your master, and by staying away without his leave, you are robbing him.'

'Other people haven't such strict notions as you and Katharine,' he replied.

'But you've been brought up with the same, James dear,' said Katharine.

'Perhaps I have,' he returned; 'but you should see how Andrew Longman does as he likes about going out.'

'Who is Andrew Longman?' asked Katharine.

'The other young man in the shop; he's been there about two months.'

'And do you mean to say he leaves the shop without his master's permission?'

'Yes, if he can do it without being found out; he is courting, and the girl lives close by, so he often slips over.'

'I hope you don't encourage him, James,' said John Winchfield, 'or think him any example for you to follow.' He spoke seriously, and with some authority, for he had known James from boyhood, and had him in his Sunday class for many a year, and James had always looked up to John. Now he replied *with some annoyance* in his tone,

'I have nothing to do with encouraging him. It's no business of mine.'

'I'm not quite sure of that,' said John. 'It might be right for you to let his master know—that you must judge of for yourself—but don't make him your excuse for acting in the same way.'

'I'm not going to act in the same way,' he said, rising up from his chair.

'Then you'll write, dear James,' said Katharine, persuasively.

'Well! there's no going against you, Katie,' he replied, frankly. 'I'll go home and do it now; and away he ran, leaving the husband and wife alone.'

'I do not like to hear of such a companion for James,' said Katharine, anxiously.

'I am sorry too,' said John; 'but we can't avoid it; he must have temptations, like other people, and he knows what's right; he ought not to be led wrong.'

'No,' said Katharine, 'he ought not; but I fear for him. If he were only a communicant, I should be more easy; but when he refuses offered strength, he will be weak against temptation.'

'He must be a communicant from his own free choice, or I fear it would not do him much good,' said John.

'Oh yes, I know that; but he *would* choose it if something was not wrong,' replied Katharine.

'Your old anxiety, Katie,' said her husband. 'You must wait; when he knows his own weakness more perhaps he'll feel his need of strength and refreshment, and not turn away.'

'Yes,' returned Katharine, 'I hope so; I don't see that we can do anything more now.'

'I don't think we can,' said her husband, 'and I don't think you ought to be so uneasy. You trained him up in the way he should go as long as

you could, and your training will not, I think, be thrown away in the end—only trust and wait.'

John Winchfield was a man of considerable education. He had been brought up at a good national school, and, besides that, had had some extra teaching, in order to fit him for a schoolmaster; but, owing to the sudden death of his father, he had been obliged to leave school, and seek for immediate employment, which he had found at a stone-quarry.

It had been a great disappointment to him at the time, and he had gone on studying at home, hoping that an opening might yet be made for him; but the death of the clergyman of his parish had destroyed all his hopes, and then it was that he had come into the neighbourhood of the Fennings, and begun to work in the quarry with them, at higher wages than he had been getting before. By his good conduct he had now risen to be the foreman, so that, as I said before, he and Katharine were very comfortably off. Out of his regular wages, weekly received, he had saved a good deal, and put it into the Savings' Bank, while all the time he had been allowing his widowed mother sufficient a week to make her comfortable, together with her own and daughter's earnings. But though John had long lost all hopes of being a schoolmaster, he had never lost his love for reading and study; and he found the advantage of it, although he was only a labourer. All who knew him looked up to him, and he was often able to help his friends with advice.

His words now strengthened his wife, as they always did; and she tried to trust and wait as he advised.

The permission to James of longer absence came, while, at the same time, he was requested to return as soon as possible after the funeral, as his master *said he found it difficult to get on without him.* Accordingly, it was fixed that he should return the

morning after the funeral, which was to be on the Sunday afternoon. The whole family followed their poor father to his resting-place, but it was to many of them a most trying service; words of hope indeed were spoken, but oh! how different a hope had been felt at the mother's grave!

It was on the return from church that Katharine took the arm of her brother James, saying,

'It may be long before I see you again, James, let us walk together;' and in that walk she said a few words of sisterly advice. James took them kindly, though he said but little, and the next morning bade them all good-bye, and started on his way to his master's. Richard went part of the way with him, and then he walked by himself.

That same evening the family met to consult about the future, how they were to live, what they had best do.

'My course is fixed; I shall go off to sea again,' said Richard, who could not settle quietly after his roving life, although John offered him work in the quarry if he would remain. 'I think I have been living upon you all long enough.'

'Oh, don't think that,' said John; 'you are welcome to stay as long as you like.'

'Besides he has not been idle,' said Charles; 'witness our garden.'

'I'll tell you what I think it will be best to do,' said Helen. 'It is a shame that poor Charles should go on spending all his wages, and laying nothing by, and I think if Miriam went out to service, I could support Kezia with my work, and she could, with my help, do what little house-work there is to do. Miriam wishes to go out herself.'

'And why shouldn't my wages go as well as your earnings?' asked Charles. 'Besides, there is Willie.'

'Willie is too young to come with me,' said

Richard, 'or I'd take him. Only I'm afraid nothing but mishaps would follow.'

'Oh, don't think that,' said Katharine; 'you'll do better now, Richard.'

'Why just look,' he said bitterly, 'here I am, instead of being able to give any help, costing you all I don't know how much to get clothes to start with, and this for the second time. It is enough, I think, to drive one mad;' and he began to pace up and down the room with hasty steps.

'Dick,' said Charles, presently, 'don't take on in that way, it will do no good. I thank God I have health and strength, and can well support the children a bit longer, and give you help too. We've got on very well since James left us, and Katie and Martha had not to be kept as well. You'll pay us back with interest, I dare say, some day.'

'That I will!' he replied, 'or you'll never see my face again.'

'Dear Richard, do not talk in that way,' said Katharine, greatly pained. 'Indeed, you add to our troubles by it, and you don't wish to do that, I know.'

'That I don't, Katie,' he said, sitting down again; 'but I feel sometimes as if I couldn't bear it.'

'It's strange, I think, that James cannot give us any help,' said Helen.

'Yes, he ought to be able,' returned John.

'He said his clothes cost him so much,' continued Helen, 'and that he *must* dress well.'

The conversation went on for some time, and at length it was decided that Miriam should go out to service, that Charles, and Helen, Kezia, and Willie, should still live together, but must move into the town, for the convenience of Helen's dressmaking.

John was most anxious to take Willie off their hands, but Charles would not listen to it; the most he would consent to was, that they should be reason-

sible for his clothing until he was old enough to be apprenticed to some trade, which he would be in a year or two. They rather feared the town would not agree with Kezia, and yet Helen could not get on without one sister at home, and so they were obliged to try it.

Almost all the expense of the funeral had fallen upon John and Katharine, for though Fenning's family had not been so pinched since James had left them, and Katharine had married and taken Martha, still they had no money to fall back upon. Charles, therefore, thought they had done more than their share already, and though it was costing him no little self-denial, he was resolute in his determination to work for his younger brothers and sisters, and not yet to gratify his own wishes. And what were they? Since Helen had lived at home, Charles had seen a good deal of her friend Tamar, and he much, very much, wished to ask her to be his wife. He thought she loved him, and he certainly loved her, but now this happiness must be waited for, and he made the sacrifice cheerfully.

It did not take long to carry these plans into effect. Mrs. Benson, to Katharine's great delight, took Miriam as her under-nursemaid. A small house was hired in the town, and thither the four brothers and sisters removed. Richard took his departure once more to seek his fortune at sea, promising many times to write when he could, and, on the whole, starting in better heart than he had shown for some time past; but Katharine, and John too, had been sorry not to see in him a more earnest spirit of repentance, and feared that when the memory and shock of his father's death had passed away, he would be as careless as ever in his duty to God. Yet he promised well, and took kindly words of advice which he would not once have done.

It was about three weeks after Fenning's death,

when a letter was put into Katharine's hands from James's master, the seal of which she broke tremblingly, and read as follows:—

'Dear Katharine,

'I am not easy about James. I don't mean that he has been guilty of any great fault, but he is not as steady as he was; he often misses church on Sunday, and never goes on the week-day now, and he has often been out much later than I like. I spoke to him about it, and he promises to be home in good time for the future; indeed, as I told him, I cannot allow my servant to be kept up so late, nor Mrs. Bushman either. He is, too, I am afraid, spending all his money on his clothes, and dressing much more expensively than he need to do, or than he did at first. I am afraid his companion rather leads him to this, for I notice he is a great dresser; but James ought to have strength to resist the temptation to follow him. I do not think in anything else he would lead James astray, for he seems a steady young man, though, as he does not live in the house with us, I cannot judge much about him. I will do my best for James, but I thought you had better know, and perhaps a word from you might do good. Love to my god-child.

'Your friend,

'HENRY BUSHMAN.'

Katharine was much troubled by this letter. Her fears, she thought, were coming true, and that James was proving weak in the day of trial. And no wonder, thought Katharine, for he is neglecting all the means of strength.

A kind and affectionate letter of warning and advice she wrote shortly afterwards, which James answered with promises of doing better, about being out at night, but the subject of church he did not mention; and after this, Katharine heard no more for a long time.

LESSON LXXVIII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

SELF-EXAMINATION A DAILY DUTY.

‘You may all stay for the Lesson to-day,’ said Miss Walton to her class, when they had said straight through the Catechism, and then she continued, ‘We saw last Sunday what are the benefits of which we are partakers in the Lord’s Supper. Now tell me, What is required of those who come to the Lord’s Supper, Agnes?’

Agnes. ‘To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God’s mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of His death; and be in charity with all men.’

Miss W. What duty, then, is required of us?

Rose. The duty of examination.

Miss W. And whom is each person to examine?

Several. Himself.

Miss W. Then the duty required of us you should not say is examination, but—?

‘Self-examination,’ said Margaret.

Miss W. Now what do you mean by ‘to examine’? Why do you always wish to get a picture into your own hands when it is shown to you?

‘To look close at it,’ said little Ruth.

Miss W. Or to examine it. Then ‘to examine’ means—?

Anna. To look at anything closely.

Miss W. Yes, and attentively; to find out everything about it. What have you seen me do when you have brought me a new flower, and I wanted to find out its name?

‘Pull it all to pieces, and look at every bit of it,’ said several.

Miss W. Yes; or—?

‘Examine it,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Just so; scrutinize, or look closely and attentively at it. But again, what does a magistrate do, when a prisoner is brought before him, accused of some crime? Does he condemn him at once?

Sarah. No; he asks a great many questions first.

Miss W. Of whom?

Several. The witnesses.

Miss W. Or, he examines the witnesses. Then to examine, is to—?

‘Ask questions,’ said one or two.

Miss W. But why does the magistrate ask questions?

All. To find out whether the prisoner is guilty.

Miss W. Yes, to prove either the guilt or innocence of the prisoner; and why doesn’t he know at once without all this questioning?

‘Because—because,’ said several, and then they stopped.

‘Well, go on, and try and tell me why,’ said Miss Walton.

‘Because,’ said Rose, ‘he didn’t see him do it, he is not quite sure whether he did do anything wrong.’

Miss W. Very good. The prisoner’s guilt or innocence is hidden, and has to be brought out by examination, or questions. So, too, when I look closely at a flower, what do I find out?

Mary. What was hidden.

Miss W. And when you take a picture into your own hands, and look closely, what do you see?

‘Little things we could not see before,’ returned Emily.

Miss W. Very well. We see, then, that whether we examine by looking closely at a thing, or by asking questions, it is for the same end. By both modes of examination, we find out—what?

Mary. Hidden things.

Miss W. Again; what does Mr. Walton do with the whole school twice a year?

Several. Examines it.

Miss W. How?

Rose. By asking questions over all we’ve learned.

Miss W. To find out—what?

Several. Whether we’ve got on as we ought to have done.

Miss W. Yes; whether you’ve learned as much as you ought to have learned in the time. And could he know this without examination?

Several. No, Ma’am.

Miss W. No; your learning or your ignorance is hidden from him, until he brings it out—how?

‘By asking us questions,’ said some.

‘By examination,’ said others.

Miss W. Now, whom does the Catechism teach us to examine?

All. Ourselves.

Miss W. And for what reason must we examine ourselves?

Agnes. To find out hidden things.

Miss W. What must you look closely into to examine yourselves?

Margaret. Our hearts.

Miss W. What does the Bible tell us of our hearts? (Jer. xvii. 9.)

Sarah. ‘The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.’

Miss W. Yes; therefore we need to look into them—how?

Several. Closely.

Miss W. Or else they will deceive us. But how does the wickedness of the heart show itself outwardly?

Rose. By sinful acts.

Miss W. Then what must we examine as well as our hearts?

Several. Our actions.

Miss W. But, occasionally, something comes before a sinful act. In the case of anger, for instance, what is it?

Ruth. A sinful word.

Miss W. Then what must we examine as well as our actions?

All. Our words.

Miss W. Now in our examination we must have some rule to go by, something by which to form our judgment. When Mr. Walton examines the school, would he condemn a child for knowing nothing of French?

‘No, Ma’am,’ said Ruth, smiling, ‘because we ar’n’t taught.’

Miss W. But would he not blame you if you knew nothing of the multiplication table?

Several. Yes, because we *are* taught it.

Miss W. Then he expects you to know—?

‘What we are taught,’ they all continued.

Miss W. He has, then, a rule to go by in forming his judgment. What is it?

‘What we’ve been taught,’ they replied again.

Miss W. It is the same with a magistrate. If it is proved that a prisoner has broken the law of the land, then what does the magistrate pronounce him to be?

All. Guilty.

Miss W. But if he has not broken the law?

Several. Innocent.

Miss W. Then what is the rule by which the magistrate examines and judges?

Anna. The law of the land.

Miss W. Now, by what law must we judge ourselves?

Mary. God's law.

Miss W. When we find we have broken God's law, what do we judge ourselves to be?

Bessie. Guilty.

Miss W. Now look at the first form in the Prayer Book, for giving notice of the Holy Communion. Are we there told that this is to be our rule?

The girls found the place, and Jane read, 'The way and means thereto is, First, to examine your lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments.'

Miss W. And how does it go on to show us we may offend against God's commandments?

Margaret. 'Either by will, word, or deed.'

Miss W. Yes; and so it teaches us, as we said just now, that we must examine our hearts or wills, and what else?

Emily. Our words and actions.

Miss W. And by what rule?

All. The rule of God's commandments.

Miss W. Now this duty of self-examination, girls, is one of great importance; it is a duty which we cannot neglect without great danger to ourselves, and before we go on with the examination for the Lord's Supper, which is especially spoken of in the Catechism, I will ask you a few questions about the duty in general. Are we ever told in the Bible to examine ourselves? Look at 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

Jane. 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?'

Miss W. We are to examine our faith whether we believe—what?

Several. 'All the articles of the Christian Faith.'

Miss W. Yes; and you remember that we saw that faith could not be real, unless we acted upon it. And we are to *prove* ourselves by—what?

Sarah. God's commandments.

Miss W. Lest by our carelessness we lose Christ's presence with us, and are cut off from Him. Now look at Lam. iii. 40.

Emily. 'Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.'

Miss W. 'Search,' or look closely into—what?

Several. Our ways.

Miss W. And 'try' them by what rule?

All. God's commandments.

Miss W. That so we may turn to Him again. Thus we find holy David acting. Psalm cxix. 59, 60.

Harriet. 'I called mine own ways to remembrance, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies. I made haste, and prolonged not the time, to keep Thy commandments.'

Miss W. Or, as the Bible Version words it, 'I thought upon my ways.' He examined his conduct, and found that he had erred, and so he turned his feet to what?

Bessie. God's testimonies.

Miss W. He prolonged not the time, he says, to keep God's commandments; but how did he find out that he was breaking them?

Rose. By thinking upon his ways.

Miss W. Yes, by examination; and, without this, the time for keeping them would have been prolonged—put off. If you were doing a piece of work from a pattern, what would you constantly do to keep right?

Several. Look at the pattern.

‘As you did when you worked that beautiful cushion for the church,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Yes. I had to lay the pattern before me—why?

Several. To guide you.

Miss W. And if I had worked without looking at the pattern, what would have happened?

Margaret. You might have got wrong.

Miss W. Then in order to keep right, both as to pattern and shade of colour, with what had I to compare my work?

Several. With the pattern.

Miss W. So, if we would keep our actions right, what must we lay before us?

Mary. God’s commandments.

Miss W. Yes, and compare our conduct with this rule. Now I’ll tell you what once happened with that very piece of worsted-work of mine. I went to spend the day with Mrs. Abbot, and took my work with me, but forgot the pattern; however, I thought I could go on with the lily without it, and accordingly did as much as I could. But, now, how could I prove my work as soon as I got home?

Several. By comparing it with the pattern.

Miss W. Just so; that I did.

‘And were you right, Ma’am?’ asked Ruth.

Miss W. Some part was right; but I had forgotten that, in the pattern, a green leaf lay over the flower in one spot, and so *that* part was wrong, and I had to undo my work. But supposing I had not compared it with the pattern, but gone on without examination, should I have found out the mistake?

Several. No, Ma’am.

Miss W. So, to find out our faults, what must we compare our conduct with?

Several. God’s commandments.

Miss W. Yes; that if we find we have erred, we may turn to them again. If I had not found out my

nistake, as I went on the whole group of flowers would have come wrong, every stitch would have been out of place; so, girls, sin, undiscovered, puts us all wrong, and before we can get right again, we must have our sin pardoned. We cannot undo it, as I could undo my work, but we can have it forgiven, and do it no more. For what purpose, then, must we examine ourselves?

Margaret. To find out our faults.

Miss W. And having found them out, to seek for—what?

Mary. Forgiveness.

Miss W. And to set ourselves to mend them. But, if we never look at our rule, what will our actions be?

Several. Wrong.

Miss W. And shall we know it?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. And if we have not found out our sin, can we ask for pardon?

Several. No, we can't.

Miss W. And if guilt is upon us, our sins unpardoned, what is hanging over us?

'God's anger,' said some.

'Punishment,' said others.

Miss W. 'If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins;' but we cannot confess what we do not know, and we cannot know our sins without comparing our conduct with—?

'God's law,' they replied.

Miss W. What, then, is it necessary we should do that we may find out our sins, confess, and forsake them, and obtain forgiveness?

Margaret. That we should examine ourselves.

Miss W. Yes; and so discover what would otherwise be hidden. And it is not enough to confess sin in general—to say that we are sinners without knowing or trying to find out in what particulars we sin.

Would it have been any good if somebody had told me my work was wrong, or that I had found it out myself, unless I had known which particular stitches were wrong?

‘No, Ma’am; for you would not have known which stitches to pull out,’ said Anna.

Miss W. So, unless we find out in what particular way we sin against God, we cannot try to amend; we do not know what to confess. It is, therefore, most necessary that we should examine ourselves. But, girls, would it have been enough for me to look at my pattern, we will say, once a week?

‘No; you had to look whenever you worked at the cushion,’ said several.

Miss W. Now, when are we liable to sin against God’s commandments?

Several. Every day.

Miss W. And what does the sin of each day make us in God’s sight?

Agnes. Guilty.

Miss W. Then what do we need from God each day?

Several. Pardon.

Miss W. And when do we ask for it?

All. When we say our prayers at night.

Miss W. But we saw just now that God promises to forgive sin, only when we do—what?

Sarah. Confess them.

Miss W. Yes; and *that* we cannot do without first—what?

‘Finding them out,’ returned Alice.

Miss W. What, then, do you think we should do each night before we begin to confess our sin, and ask forgiveness?

Several. Try and find out what we have done wrong.

Miss W. Yes; compare our conduct for the day with—what?

Emily. God's commandments.

Miss W. Indeed we should, lest we lie down, perhaps never to rise again, with sin undiscovered, unconfessed, and unforgiven. If it was necessary that each time I worked I should compare my work with the pattern, so it is necessary that each day we should compare our conduct with the rule laid before us—that we should examine ourselves, look into our hearts, and at what else?

Mary. Our words, and actions.

Miss W. And if we do this every day, it makes our work easier. We have but a few hours to look back upon, and can better remember what we have done in that time, than if it were a longer time. Then there is another reason why we should think upon our ways daily. The longer I had gone on doing my work wrongly, the more difficult it would have been to pull it undone, and correct the mistake; so, if we go on days or weeks in sin, what will it be harder to do at last?

'To leave it off,' said Anna.

Miss W. But if we earnestly examine ourselves, day by day, we do not give sin time to get such a hold upon us. We prolong not the time to keep God's commandments. And, girls, none of you are too young to try and perform this duty. After you kneel down, before you begin to say your prayers, think for a few minutes how the day has been spent, and then ask yourselves a few such questions as these:—

Have I been obedient to my parents?

Have I been kind to my brothers and sisters?

Have I been diligent over my lessons or my work?

Have I tried to say my prayers, and read the Bible *thoughtfully*?

And this will help you to bring to mind any failures, which otherwise you would quite forget, and so not

confess. And if you remember any sin, what must you do ?

Agnes. Confess it to God, and ask Him to forgive us.

Miss W. Yes ; confess not only that you have done wrong things in general, but confess the particular fault your examination has brought to mind ; and if you feel really sorry, and mean to try not to do the same thing again, what will God do ?

Ruth. Forgive us.

Miss W. Surely He will, and you will find yourself strengthened in the right way. You will know better what sins to watch against the next day, and every day. But after we have done our best, there may still be sins hidden. Look in Psalm xix. 12, what David says of this ?

Jane. 'Who can tell how oft he offendeth ? O cleanse Thou me from my secret faults.'

Miss W. What does he mean by 'secret faults' ?

Ruth. Hidden faults.

Miss W. Yes ; and since we cannot tell how oft we offend—cannot call all our faults to mind, he teaches us to pray God to forgive our hidden sins—sins which, after doing our best, we cannot find out, or have forgotten. Who did our Saviour say should convince the world of sin ?

Anna. The Holy Spirit. (St. John, xvi. 7–9.)

Miss W. And, therefore, in our work of examination, to Whom should we pray for help to know ourselves ?

Several. To God.

Miss W. Now, do you remember any such prayer in the Psalms ?

Rose. 'Examine me, O Lord, and prove me ; try out my reins and my heart.' (Psalm xxvi. 2.)

Margaret. 'Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart : prove me, and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me.'

and lead me in the way everlasting.' (Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24.)

Miss W. Very good; and one of these short prayers you might use, before you begin to think over your conduct of the past day, and then ask God to help your examination, and convince you of sin; and, as I said before, the youngest among you is not too young to think what God would wish her to do, and to think each night for a few minutes whether she has tried to do it, and to confess every failure she remembers. If we do this, we may lie down in peace and safety, trusting ourselves to our Father's keeping. What are those pretty lines some of you have learned to say after you get into bed?

'Now I lay me down to sleep,
Lord, be Thou pleased my soul to keep;
And if I never should awake,
Lord, be Thou pleased my soul to take,
For Jesus my Redeemer's sake,'

repeated little Ruth.

Miss W. But the child who has not tried to remember what she has done wrong, and to ask God to forgive her, could hardly say these words; for how can she be fit to die—never to awake in this world—if she has done naughty things and has forgotten them, and never felt sorry for them, never confessed them, and asked for pardon? What, then, must you all try to do, girls?

Several. To remember each night what we have done wrong.

Miss W. And how can you try to do this?

Alice. By stopping to think before we say our prayers.

'And asking God to help us,' added Mary.

Miss W. And how will you know whether your conduct is wrong?

Ruth. By thinking what God would wish us to do.

Miss W. Yes; what He has bid you do, by com-

paring your conduct with God's commandments. For example, what does the fifth commandment bid you do?

All. Honour our father and mother.

Miss W. Then if you remember that you have disobeyed your mother, or spoken disrespectfully to your father, what do you know, from this commandment, that your conduct was?

Jane. Wrong.

Miss W. Or, if you remember that you read your Bibles in school carelessly, which commandment do you know teaches you to honour God's holy Name and His Word?

Several. The third.

Miss W. Then in comparing your way of reading with God's command, you know you have done wrong; and so with other things. One more example: what is the eighth commandment?

All. 'Thou shalt not steal.'

Miss W. And what does this commandment teach you to keep your hands from?

Several. Picking and stealing.

Miss W. Then if you remember that as you passed the sugar-bowl, you took some sugar when no one saw you, or something of that kind, what would you know the act to have been?

Several. Stealing.

Miss W. But if you did not think at night over what you have done in the day, such an act as that would perhaps be forgotten in a short time, and then you would never feel sorry for that sin, or ask for pardon for it; and then, perhaps, years afterwards, it will come to your mind, with many, many others, and be a weight too heavy to bear. The sins of each day are a sufficient weight; we should not add the sins of yesterday to to-day's, or last week's to this week's. If we do so, the weight will at length be so heavy, that it will sink us into hell.

And how may we, if we will, get rid of the weight of sin ?

Margaret. By repentance and confession.

Miss W. Yes ; each day, then, we must lay down the burden of the sins of the day at the foot of the cross, lay it upon Him who came to bear our sins, and carry our sorrows ; and this we can only do, by daily examination, sorrow, and confession. And having done this, we may trust that He will surely take our burden, cleanse us from our guilt—even the guilt of sins we would remember, but cannot—and set us free to go on our way rejoicing.

Our lesson has been long enough now, without any questioning upon special examination for the Lord's Supper, (said Miss Walton, after a moment's pause,) so shut your books, and give me 'The Elder Sister.'

Alice jumped up and reached it to her, and Miss Walton began to read.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*continued.*)

Katharine, I said, heard no more of James for some time, and she hoped that no news was good news, and that he was now giving his master satisfaction again. For a time after Mr. Bushman's speaking, and Katharine's letter, James did come home in better time, but his Sundays were still spent in a way that would indeed have grieved his sister, and that his own conscience had at first strongly condemned. He was led on, however, by little and little, and laughed out of his strict notions, (as they were called,) both by Andrew, and those to whom Andrew introduced him ; and now the Sunday was mostly spent at the house of Mrs. Tatler, or walking out with her daughters, foolish, vain, unprincipled girls. At first James had not liked them at all, but he had continued to go to the house, partly because he did not

like to refuse Andrew, partly because he was flattered by the attention Mrs. Tatler paid him; and now, I am sorry to say, he had learned to overlook things which had at first displeased him, and to enjoy the society of the vain and careless. Andrew was engaged to the eldest girl, Susan, and James paid great attention to the third, Harriet. It was she who had tempted him to stay out late, and by persuasion and ridicule led him more and more to neglect church; and with it James began to be careless over his morning and evening prayers. He had been taught to think over the events of the day before he began to say his prayers, that he might remember and confess anything wrong in his conduct; but now he did not stop to do this, but hurried over the words in a thoughtless, careless way, thinking, perhaps, of what had happened in the evening, or of the engagement of the next night, and of Harriet's words or looks. She, indeed, did not show any particular liking for him, but this Andrew persuaded James was only put on, and often said,

'If you've any spirit, you'll be only the more determined to get her.'

For a time, however, after Mr. Bushman spoke to James, as I said, he came home more regularly, and at an earlier hour; and Harriet consequently was colder towards him, and began to show a marked preference for another young man. Just then, however, Mr. Bushman was laid up by a severe illness, and was compelled to entrust the shop business entirely to James and Andrew.

'I hope I may feel confidence in you both,' he said, speaking to the two young men; 'and that you will attend conscientiously to my business, although I am confined to my room, and cannot look after it myself.' James thought how little he knew the way in which Andrew often left the shop, when his master was not there, and stayed out when sent an errand; and for a

moment his conscience smote him, as he remembered that he had himself not only kept these things secret, but from an idea of being good-natured, sometimes given him a helping hand. He could not now, therefore, say anything, and both the young men promised well. James did venture to say to his companion, as they left,

‘You’ll keep to the shop now that Master’s laid up, I hope, more steadily.’

‘That’s like your notion,’ he replied, carelessly. ‘I thought “when the cat’s away the mice can play.” He’ll never know if we shut up shop a bit earlier.’

James felt uncomfortable, and still more so, when that same evening Mr. Bushman spoke to him alone, and said,

‘It is upon *you* I depend most, James. I know you’ve been well brought up; you know what is right, and I hope you will do it. I have been glad to see you took what I said to you a few days ago so well, and have come home in good time. This makes me feel the more confidence in you, and I trust to you to look after my affairs, and tell me if you see anything going wrong; and if I find all goes on well while I am unable to look after things, you shall not be a loser.’

‘Thank you, Sir, I’ll do my best,’ he replied, and he left his master fully intending to do so, proud to feel himself trusted, and hoping, by his conduct, to raise himself in his business. But James knew not his own weakness.

For some days things went on very well; but then Andrew began to go out very frequently, and stay long. Customers would come in, and there was no one to wait upon them. What was James to do? Speaking to Andrew did no good. He then threatened to complain to Mr. Bushman, and Andrew’s answer was,

‘Do if you like, but don’t expect to get Harriet if you do. She’ll never speak to you again, I can tell you, if you do.’ The same evening there came a special invitation to James to go over to the Tatlers.

He was sitting all alone, feeling very dull, for cheerful Mrs. Bushman was up-stairs with her husband, and Jane, the daughter, had left the room soon after her mother. James was thinking at the time what he was to do about Andrew. When he remembered how he had gone with Andrew, been introduced by him to the Tatlers, and visited there constantly since, and how often he had helped Andrew to run over for a few minutes, he felt that he had involved himself in the blame, and could not go on acting in that way, and yet complain to his master; but, then, could he not give up Harriet, and the pleasure of visiting them? If he did this, his course was plain. And did not his master’s interests, which were now more than ever committed to him, require this of him?

Mr. Bushman was not mistaken in thinking that James knew what was right, but he was mistaken in thinking that he had strength to do it; once he might have had; now by going on acting against his conscience, first in one little thing, and then another, by neglecting the means of grace, and never stopping to think what he was doing, how his actions would bear to be looked closely into, and compared with God’s commandments, he was weak and irresolute. It was at this moment the invitation reached him; he jumped up with a yawn, thinking,

‘Well! I may as well go this once; perhaps Andrew won’t go out so often, after what I said to-day; and running up-stairs, he dressed as hastily as he could, and soon found himself in Mrs. Tatler’s parlour. He was received with many welcomes, and great complaints that he had not been so often lately.

‘Why Master’s illness keeps one closer,’ he replied. ‘I’ve had all the accounts to do since shop closed.’

Even Harriet welcomed him, and encouraged his attentions more than usual; and in the enjoyments of the evening, and of her smiles, James forgot his anxiety. It was later than common when he returned home, but the servant let him in, and no one knew; and though James did not feel easy as he knelt down to say his prayers, he would not stop to think, but hurrying through them, was soon in bed and asleep. After this, he was there almost every night, and Harriet certainly began to show him more favour. James’s hopes were raised; and each visit there tended to bind the chain faster, which linked him and Andrew together, and made it more impossible for him to complain of Andrew’s conduct, though he saw much which he knew was not right. Not many days afterwards, he was made very uncomfortable by seeing Andrew cut off a yard or two of ribbon, fold it up, and put it into his pocket; and in a few moments afterwards, he was gone. Andrew did not know he’d been seen, and James thought,

‘I suppose he’ll pay for it afterwards.’ James kept the accounts, so just before closing the shop, he said, ‘Have you paid for the bit of ribbon you took to Susan to-day?’

Andrew started, and replied, ‘No; she said she’d give me the money to-morrow.’

‘Well be sure you bring it,’ replied James, feeling far from comfortable, but he never found that it had been brought.

Soon after this he missed a collar, and could find no account of it. He spoke to Andrew, who declared he knew nothing about it; and yet, some days afterwards, when James accidentally met Susan, he felt sure she wore the very collar. James could no longer doubt that Andrew was defrauding his master. *Was he to stand by quietly and say no-*

thing, or was he to speak, and lose all chance of Harriet?

Oh! James, James, what a difficulty you have brought yourself into! How much harder it will be to retrace your steps, than it would have been never to have taken them! How has your weakness, and yielding to temptation, brought its own punishment!

Thoroughly unhappy James now felt, yet he weakly went on doing nothing, drowning thought in the society of those who were robbing his master. Break from them, and James knew he could speak to his master without difficulty, but this he could not make up his mind to do. When James was not at the Tatlers', he felt miserable enough; when he was there, he forgot everything in a false enjoyment. Even now, I think, if James had seriously set himself to 'consider his ways,' he might have turned from them before it was too late; but this he did not do. He avoided thought, and so he got deeper and deeper into what was wrong, hardly knowing, or at least without perceiving, whither each step was leading him.

Had Katharine known all this, she would not have felt as easy as she did; but she hoped for the best, and James had never mentioned the Tatlers to her. There, again, want of thinking upon his ways was the cause of his error. If he had thought, he would have known that Harriet was not fit for his wife—that he could not support a girl who would do nothing for herself, and loved fine dress and gaiety; and he would have seen, too, that she did not really care for him, that she was only playing with him. The truth was, just now, they were paying him more attention than usual, and she encouraged him more, because they wished to buy his silence. They feared his complaining of Andrew.

Oh! if James had not so weakly yielded,—if he had but had the courage to look steadily at his ways,

all this would have been plain to him, and both shame and misery would have been spared him; but he wilfully shut his eyes: no wonder he could not see!

And how were things going on at home all this time? I fear James did not think much about it, but my readers, I hope, will be glad to hear that they were prosperous.

Helen, who in watchfulness and prayer, and frequent communions, had steadily persevered in the right way ever since her confirmation, found her work improve after moving into the town. She had soon more than she could do herself, and her friend Tamar joined her in the business, lodging in a house close by. She found herself well able to provide for Kezia, who still continued delicate; but she was a good child, and did cheerfully all she was able to do; and when her two hours of schooling in an afternoon, which Mr. Benson kindly allowed her to have (though she could not attend all day,) were over, she would sit and read out, while Helen and Tamar sat at work. Later in the evening Charles took her place, and certainly they were a cheerful, peaceful-looking party, when all were assembled in the little working-room, and a fire blazed brightly; and, though their fingers were often weary, the reading and cheerful talking were a help, and fatigue was forgotten. While Willie was up, there was not, indeed, much chance of reading, for he was a merry, wild boy, and said he got enough of books at school. Sometimes, however, he was banished to the kitchen, to pursue his boat-making, or top-spinning, or whatever boyish amusement he chose, where he could play in peace, without making Helen tremble for the silk-gown on which she was working, or the white muslin which lay about, and which Willie *did not* respect one bit. 'It would not even make a sail for his boat,' he said; 'he was sure it was good for nothing.' Sometimes Willie thought

it rather hard that he might not play in the street after dark, but upon this subject Charles was not to be moved; and after Willie had once or twice been sent supperless to bed for staying out too late, there was no more trouble about it—and then Charles made up for it by sometimes a game of marbles with Willie in the kitchen, sometimes a good romp, and an ever ready willingness to give the little boy all lawful pleasure. Willie loved Charles with all his heart.

When night came, it was Charles's happiness to see Tamar safely home, and this he did with all the respect which a Christian man should ever show to any woman with whom he has intercourse. It was but a few steps from one house to the other, but Tamar was thankful for his protection, and at the door they parted with a cheerful 'good night.' She knew not yet how much happiness it gave to Charles, and she tried not to feel too happy herself. She often questioned herself upon her feelings towards him, and her conscience was clear; she did not seek his company, and she felt there was no reason to turn from it, when the pleasure came in the path of duty.

Charles, in the meantime, was saving every penny he could, and was longing to tell her his whole heart.

'That will do, girls, for to-day,' said Miss Walton. 'I think you may learn from it the importance of daily self-examination—the danger of neglecting it. Now put away your books quickly.'

LESSON LXXIX.

THE SACRAMENTS.

SPECIAL SELF-EXAMINATION FOR THE LORD'S
SUPPER.

It does the Catechism teach us is required of
who come to the Lord's Supper?' asked Miss
L.

ral. 'To examine themselves, whether they re-
pent truly of their former sins, steadfastly pur-
pose to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's
mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance
of death; and be in charity with all men.'

'W, to understand this answer,' said Miss Wal-
ton must put in the words "whether they,"
each subject of examination. Take your
and Rose read it in that way.'

'To examine themselves, whether they re-
pent truly of their former sins, whether they
truly purpose to lead a new life; whether they
have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ;
whether they have a thankful remembrance of His
mercy and whether they be in charity with all

W. You need not have put it in before 'pur-
pose to lead a new life,' because what is that a part

enance,' said Margaret.

W. Yes; we cannot truly repent unless we

purpose to lead a new life—to give up those sins for which we sorrow. Then how many subjects are there for self examination?

Some said ‘Four,’ others ‘Five,’ and some ‘Three.’

‘Four, I should say was the right answer,’ continued Miss Walton. ‘First, we are to examine ourselves whether we—?’

‘Repent,’ they replied.

Miss W. And there are two parts of repentance to be examined. We are to look backwards and forwards. Backwards to find out—what?

Sarah. Whether we repent us truly of our former sins.

Miss W. Yes; whether we are sorry for them; and forwards, whether we purpose—?

‘To lead a new life,’ said Anna.

Miss W. Yes, for the time to come; and thus we shall have examined ourselves on the first subject, *Repentance*. Now, secondly, we are to examine ourselves whether we have—what?

Alice. ‘A lively faith in God’s mercy through Christ.’

Miss W. Right. Then the second subject is—?

‘Faith,’ said Mary.

Miss W. And, thirdly, we are to examine whether along with this faith we have—?

Ruth. ‘A thankful remembrance of Christ’s death.’

Miss W. What, then, is the third subject for self-examination?

‘Thankfulness,’ said Emily.

Miss W. Fourthly, and lastly, we are to examine whether we be in—

‘Charity with all men,’ they answered.

Miss W. Then the fourth subject is—?

All. ‘Charity.’

Miss W. Four subjects, then, are given us. Tell me them quickly again.

‘Repentance, Faith, Thankfulness, and Charity,’ said Rose, Margaret, and others.

Miss W. Very good. And of whom is this self-examination required?

Bessie. Those who come to the Lord’s Supper.

Miss W. And who requires it of them?

‘The Church,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Yes; but not the Church only. Look at 1 Cor. xi. 28.

Jane. ‘Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.’

Miss W. Who, then, requires it?

Several. God.

Miss W. Yes, not the Church only, but God Himself, by the mouth of St. Paul, requires a man to examine himself, and so to eat and drink of that bread and that cup. Now if you will turn to the exhortation, read when warning is given of the Lord’s Supper, you will see why self-examination is especially needful before drawing near. When did you tell me last Sunday we should examine ourselves?

Alice. Every day.

Miss W. But now we shall see that it is especially required—when?

Sarah. Before going to the Lord’s Supper.

Miss W. Yes; in the exhortation which you have open, we are told that God has given His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but—what else?

Anna. ‘To be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy Sacrament.’

Miss W. And then what further is said of this holy Sacrament?

Emily. ‘Which being so divine and comfortable a thing to them who receive it worthily, and so dangerous to them that will presume to receive it unworthily; my duty is to exhort you in the mean season to consider the dignity of that holy mystery,

and the great peril of the unworthy receiving thereof; and so to search and examine your own consciences, (and that not lightly, and after the manner of dissemblers with God; but so) that ye may come holy and clean to such a heavenly Feast, in the marriage-garment required by God in Holy Scripture, and be received as worthy partakers of that holy Table.'

Miss W. Then what is the Sacrament to those who receive it unworthily, or fitly, in a proper manner?

Several. Divine and comfortable.

Miss W. And what is it to those who receive it unworthily, or unfitly, in an improper manner?

Mary. Dangerous.

Miss W. We must prepare, then, for the Lord's Supper, that we may receive it—how?

Margaret. Worthily.

Miss W. So that It may be to us—what?

Rose. Divine and comfortable.

Miss W. And we must prepare, that we may avoid receiving It unworthily, and so escape—?

'The danger,' said Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; and this we must do—how?

'By considering the dignity of that holy mystery,' said Rose; 'and the great peril of the unworthy receiving thereof.'

'By examining our consciences,' said Margaret.

Miss W. Yes; we must examine ourselves because of the *benefits* we gain by worthily receiving the Lord's Supper, and the *danger* of unworthily receiving. This is put more plainly still in the exhortation at the celebration. What does the clergyman bid us consider?

Sarah. 'How St. Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.'

Miss W. And for what reason? Read it without the parenthesis.

Ruth. 'For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy Sacrament; so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily.'

Miss W. Self-examination, then, is especially required before going to the Lord's Supper, because of the great benefits of receiving it—how?

Anna. Worthily.

Miss W. And because of the great danger of receiving it—how?

Several. Unworthily.

Miss W. What are we told are the benefits of worthily receiving?

Alice. 'Then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us.'

Miss W. And what is the danger of unworthily receiving?

Jane. 'Then we are guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's Body; we kindle God's wrath against us; we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death.'

Miss W. Therefore, the danger being so great, the benefits so unspeakable, what are we exhorted to do?

Sarah. 'Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent you truly for your sins past; have a lively and steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men; so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries.'

Miss W. Judge, or examine yourselves, that ye may be meet partakers, (or worthily partake,) and so gain the benefits, and so escape the danger. What, then, is meant by receiving worthily?

'Being worthy to receive,' said some.

‘No,’ said Miss Walton, ‘we can never be worthy to receive so great a blessing, yet we may receive it worthily; that is, in as fit and proper a manner as possible. Then, to receive worthily, means to receive—how?’

Agnes. In a fit and proper manner.

Miss W. And to receive unworthily?

Emily. In an unfit and improper manner.

Miss W. I wish you to understand this, because there is a great difference between being *worthy* to receive the Lord’s Supper, and receiving it *worthily*: and between being *unworthy* to receive it, and receiving *unworthily*. We are none of us *worthy* to receive it: we must all strive to receive it *worthily*. I will read you an extract from a plain little book on the Holy Communion, which will help you to understand it.

‘If a nobleman were to ask one of you poor persons to dine with him at his table, you might feel that you were very unfit’ (or unworthy, said Miss Walton) ‘to sit down with him—you would not know how to behave, and your clothes would not suit with his handsome furniture. Perhaps you might tell him this, and say that you hardly thought it right for you to go. He, probably, would answer, that that was not your concern, but his. If he chose to have you to dine with him, all you had to do was to go, and behave as well as you knew how, and he would be satisfied. If you went and conducted yourself as well as you could, you would be doing it properly.’ ‘Or what might you say?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘Worthily,’ answered the girls.

Miss W. Yes. Now I will go on reading.

‘God is much greater than any nobleman, and He asks you to come and sup with Him. Neither you nor I are fit’ (or worthy) ‘to be at His Table; but, if we come as well as we can, wishing we could be a great deal better, we shall come worthily. We are

to take pains to get ready beforehand, that we may do it as well as we can.'* Now what would a person feel himself to be, when asked by a nobleman to dinner?

'Unfit to go,' said some.

'Unworthy to go,' said others.

Miss W. And yet, if he prepared as well as he could, and behaved as well as he could, he would go—how?

Several. Worthily.

Miss W. So we are utterly unfit, unworthy to go to the Lord's Supper, and must feel ourselves to be so, yet God, in mercy, judges that we go worthily, we do—what?

Agnes. Prepare as well as we can.

'And behave as well as we can when we are there,' said Anna.

Miss W. Yes; but if we take no pains to prepare, and also behave in an unseemly way when there, we are not only unworthy to go, but go—how?

Several. Unworthily.

Miss W. And what does St. Paul say of such?

Margaret. 'Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. . . . He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body.'

Miss W. Does he, therefore, because of this great danger, bid them stay away, and not eat at all?

Rose. No: 'Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.'

Miss W. Yes; and afterwards he says, 'If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.' Because, then, of the benefits of going to the Lord's

* See 'The Holy Communion,' &c. &c., by the Rev. W. H. Ridley, M.A. A plain and admirable little book for the labouring class.

Supper worthily, and because of the danger of going unworthily, what must we do?

All. Examine ourselves.

Miss W. Before I ask you any more questions, I will tell you how St. Paul came to give this warning, and speak so strongly about receiving unworthily. 'He particularly referred to some very strange and bad practices which the Corinthians were guilty of. The rich people who came to the Sacrament, used to bring meat and drink for the poor, that all the Christians might have a Feast together at the time. Some of the bread and wine which was brought for the Feast, was taken and blessed for the Sacrament. Some careless and ungodly people made no difference between that part which had been blessed for the Sacrament, and that which had not been blessed; or, in St. Paul's words, they did "not discern the Lord's Body." . . . So they despised the Sacrament, they counted it as nothing particular, the same thing, I may say, as eating their ordinary dinner. Then they ate and drank too much at the Feast, and turned it into a drunken revel, instead of a holy, solemn entertainment. This was a most frightful mockery of God's Holy Ordinance; no wonder that St. Paul should warn them that, by committing this dreadful sin,* they were guilty of—what?

Several. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Yes; and ate and drank damnation to themselves. And this manner of eating and drinking he called—what, girls?

Several. 'Eating and drinking unworthily.'

Miss W. Now, though we cannot now be guilty of eating and drinking in the same unfit manner, yet we may come to the Lord's Supper unworthily; and, therefore, what are we bid to do?

All. Examine ourselves.

Miss W. First, whether we—?

* *Ibid.*

Anna. Repent, and intend to lead a new life.

Miss W. Now, for what purpose did our Lord shed His Blood for us?

Mary. To wash away our sins.

Miss W. What then, must we feel ourselves to be, before we shall rightly value His Body given for us, His Blood shed for us?

‘Sinners,’ said one or two.

Miss W. Who does our Lord say need a physician?

Ruth. They that are sick.

Miss W. And the more a person feels his sickness, the more he will value—what?

Several. The physician.

Miss W. And the more glad he will be to see him—the more he will welcome him. But, if a physician came to a man who felt himself quite well, how would he receive him?

Several. He would not value him.

Miss W. Or he would look upon him only as a common friend, not as a physician. So, if we do not feel ourselves to be sinners, and yet go to the Lord’s Supper, how shall we feel about it?

Mary. We shall not value it as we ought.

Miss W. Then how shall we eat of that bread, and drink of that cup?

‘Unworthily,’ said Sarah.

Miss W. Yes; because not in a humble manner, not valuing the precious Body and Blood of Christ given therein: He, then, that goes to the Lord’s Supper in impenitence, goes—how?

Margaret. Unworthily.

Miss W. Therefore the Church bids us first examine ourselves whether we—?

‘Repent truly,’ said Emily.

Miss W. The same may be said of going without the steadfast purpose to amend. Christ came not only to save us from the guilt of sin, but—what else?

Rose. The power.

Miss W. And what are the benefits our souls receive in the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. Strengthening and refreshing.

Miss W. But if we do not wish to be delivered from sin's power, if we do not purpose or intend to leave off sin, to give up evil speaking, or careless saying of prayers, dishonesty, or any other sin of which we have before been guilty, how shall we feel about this offered strength?

'We shall not care about it,' said some.

'We shall not value it,' said others.

Miss W. Then to go in a proper manner for this strengthening grace, we must first—what?

Agnes. Wish for it, and value it.

Miss W. And we shall only do this if we purpose to forsake sin; therefore we are to examine ourselves whether we repent, and steadfastly—?

'Purpose to lead a new life,' continued Harriet.

Miss W. And what is the second thing about which we are bid to look into ourselves?

Alice. Faith.

Miss W. What must we believe God in mercy gives us, when we receive the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper?

Jane. 'The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.'

Miss W. But if we only take it as common food, like the Corinthians, then how do we receive?

All. Unworthily.

Miss W. Yes; not with faith in God's mercy through Christ—mercy given in Him, sealed to us in our partaking of what?

Margaret. His Body and Blood.

Miss W. Therefore in what are we to examine ourselves?

Rose. Whether we have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ.

Miss W. And surely we shall receive unworthily if we have not a thankful remembrance of—what?

Harriet. Christ's death.

Miss W. Of that which the Lord's Supper represents—shows forth. We shall not care to show It forth, if we do not feel thankful for It. If we went in unthankfulness, how should we then eat and drink?

Sarah. Unworthily.

Miss W. Yes, in an unhumbled, unthankful manner. Therefore we must examine ourselves whether we have—?

'A thankful remembrance of His death,' said Ruth.

Miss W. And lastly, lest we eat unworthily, we are to examine whether we be—?

Several. In charity with all men.

Miss W. Because God is Love, and love cannot enter in and dwell with hatred and ill-will. What is the new commandment we have of God? Look at 1 St. John, iv. 21.

Alice. 'That he who loveth God love his brother also.'

Miss W. And look what he says also in Chapter iii. 14.

Anna. 'He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.'

Miss W. If we go, then, to the Lord's Supper in hatred and anger, we cannot receive Christ, our Life, to dwell with us. We might take the bread and drink the wine, but it would be unworthily, because not in love. Therefore what must we do? .

All. Examine ourselves.

Miss W. Yes; that we may escape the danger of unworthily receiving the Lord's Supper, and that we may be made partakers of the benefits—that we may

come in as fit a manner as possible. Do you remember our Lord's Parable of the king, who made a marriage for his son?

'Yes, Ma'am,' said several.

'And those that were bidden would not come,' said Agnes. (See St. Matt. xxii. 1-14.)

Miss W. Therefore whom were the servants told to invite in?

Ruth. People from the highways and hedges.

'All, as many as they could find, both bad and good,' added Anna.

Miss W. And do you think all these were fit, or worthy, to come to such a feast?

Several. No, Ma'am, there were bad and good.

Miss W. Yet when the king came in, did he find fault with all these, and say they were not worthy to sit down at his table?

All. No; only with one.

Miss W. And why did he find fault with him?

Several. Because he had not on a wedding garment.

Miss W. And why did he find no fault with the others, though they were unworthy to be there?

Mary. Because they had got on wedding garments.

Miss W. What preparation, then, was required of each person who came to the feast?

Sarah. That he should put on a wedding garment.

Miss W. Yes; as was always done in that country. The king, then, considered those who had on the garment, to have come to his feast—how?

Agnes. Worthily.

Miss W. Yes; or in a—?

'Proper manner,' said one or two.

Miss W. But he who came without, as coming—how?

All. Unworthily.

Miss W. Or in—?

'An improper manner,' they said again.

Miss W. So what does God require of those who come to the Lord's Supper?

Emily. To examine themselves.

Miss W. Yes; to prepare themselves, as those prepared themselves who put on the wedding garment;—to do their best to make themselves ready. Now what sort of clothing do you think that garment covered in many of them?

Ruth. Very bad clothes.

Miss W. Yes; probably torn and dirty clothes; yet did the king consider that they had come in an improper manner?

Several. No; because they had on the wedding garment.

Miss W. So if in our examination we find ourselves very sinful and weak, still if we do our best, will Christ look on us as coming unworthily?

Mary. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No; but He will cover our unworthiness with the wedding garment of His righteousness: only let us accept the pardon, and strength, and grace, He offers. Where did those men get the wedding garment?

'The king gave it to them,' said Rose.

Miss W. Yes; it was always the custom for the host to give a wedding garment to each guest; then might not the one man have had it also?

Margaret. Yes, if he would have taken it.

Miss W. So may we, if we will prepare ourselves to be meet partakers of the Feast of the Lord's Supper. Because, if we do as God bids us, if we examine ourselves, and humble ourselves, and truly repent, He will do His part. He will pardon and strengthen us, and look on us as clothed in the wedding garment He requires. Turn again to the invitation to the Holy Communion in the Prayer Book. After speaking of the benefit of worthily receiving,

and the danger of receiving unworthily, what does the clergyman say? *How* does he bid us examine our consciences?

Anna. 'So to search and examine your own consciences (and that not lightly and after the manner of dissemblers with God; but so) that ye may come holy and clean to such a heavenly Feast, in the marriage garment required by God in Holy Scripture.'

Miss W. He will give us the marriage garment, if we faithfully do our part, earnestly and truly examine ourselves whether we—?

Margaret. Repent truly of our former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life, have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of His death, and be in charity with all men.

Miss W. Now I will not ask you anything about the subjects of examination until another lesson. This, I think, has been long enough, and, I am sorry to say, I cannot read to you to-day; you must go now.

This was a disappointment, but they took it cheerfully, and were soon all walking along merrily enough towards the village, when Margaret exclaimed,

'Look'ee, Sarah, isn't that your Frank coming along?'

'That it is!' cried half-a-dozen, while Sarah herself was too bewildered for a moment to know her brother, as he hastily came up the hill to meet her.

It was a joyful meeting to the brother and sister, though Sarah could have wished it had been more private; but this thought had never entered into the mind of the bluff, though good-natured sailor, for on hearing that Sarah was at her lesson at the Vicarage, he at once exclaimed,

'I'll go and meet her, then, and surprise her. She'll not know me, I'll be bound;' and though Catherine had assured him it was too early for the

lesson to be over, he was so anxious to see his sister, he would not wait, but said if he did'nt meet her, he'd go on to the Vicarage, and send for her out.

Having greeted his sister first, he now turned round to speak to his old friends and school-fellows, some of whom had almost grown out of his knowledge, shaking hands first with one, and then another, exclaiming by turns,

'Well, Margaret; but you have grown! Where's Emily?'

'Here she is!' answered Margaret, laughing, for Emily stood by her side.

'That Emily! why I am sure I didn't know her,' still looking half incredulous, as he passed on from her to Rose, and said, 'How do you do, Rose? As little as ever. Hey! Bessie, is that you, or your sister? Well, Jane! I hope you're well, and Harriet, too.' Then looking at Ruth, with rather a puzzled expression, as if he did not know her, he exclaimed, 'Ruth, I declare! Why, you are as tall as Rose, very nearly!'

'How do you do, little Agnes—glad to see you, Alice.'

'Ah! Anna, you are less altered than any,' he said, as he shook her warmly by the hand.

'But who is this hiding behind?' he continued, for Mary had tried to keep out of sight, behind Margaret.

'Oh! its Mary Landson,' cried half-a-dozen, 'you don't know her.'

'Oh! but you must know her,' cried Margaret, good-naturedly. 'She's a great friend of ours.'

'Then let us shake hands,' he said, not rudely, but with a kindness which won Mary's confidence; and she held out her hand to receive the sailor's greeting.

Then followed a host of questions and answers, coming far too fast for us to repeat them all; though perhaps we may select a few from among them.

‘When did you come, Frank?’

‘Not ten minutes ago.’

‘Why didn’t you write and say you were coming?’

‘Why? because that’s rather slow work. I only got into port last night, and then I started early this morning, and walked most of the way here. I thought I should get in time for evening Church.’

‘But you must be tired!’

‘So I was till I got here; but the sight of old faces does one good. And how came you to be out so soon from Miss Walton? Catherine said your lesson would not be done for ever so long.’

‘Oh! we had no story,’ cried half-a-dozen. ‘We were so sorry, but now we are glad!’

Frank did not look much wiser for the explanation, so Sarah went on to tell him that Miss Walton generally read them a story, but hadn’t that day.

But now they had reached the village, and Margaret was the first to say,

‘Good-bye, Frank; we shall see you again.’

‘I should think so!’ he replied.

Emily followed her sister rather reluctantly, until Margaret said,

‘I’m sure Sarah must want him to herself. I wish the rest would go,’ and looking back, she saw that Rose and Ruth had gone, as well as Mary and Agnes. The rest stood a little while talking, and then dispersed, and Sarah and her brother went towards home. Frank’s first exclamation was,

‘How well Anna looks! I was so afraid she’d be altered; grown into one of your grand young women, and you know I can’t abide them.’

Sarah laughed, and said, ‘You don’t know what she’ll be yet, she’s only just turned eighteen.’

‘Well, I’m sure there’s many a girl of eighteen who wouldn’t look as pretty and modest as Anna, and would think herself a great deal too grand to go to school.’

'We none of us think *that*,' said Sarah. 'We like to go as long as ever Miss Walton will have us. You know I'm eighteen too, and Margaret's seventeen.'

But we will not follow the conversation of the brother and sister, who, you may be sure, after nearly two years' separation, had much to say to each other, especially as they had been companions from childhood, until Frank went to sea at fourteen, soon after his mother's death. He was only two years older than Sarah, and had been always a good steady boy. William was much older than either of them, and they had always been accustomed to look up to him more as a father than a brother, even before their mother's death; and, as we know, since then Sarah had been living with him, while her favourite brother Frank was earning his livelihood at sea. Much, however, as they had to say to each other, the evening church bell did not call to them in vain, and sounded indeed like home to poor Frank, who had not heard a church bell for many a month before. It took him some time to get down to church, he had so many to greet, and among the number Mr. and Miss Walton, who had not heard of his arrival.

When service was over, he contrived to place himself at Anna's side, and had the pleasure of walking all the way home with her. It was dark, so he said he would see her safely home, and Sarah did not mind going round with him. Of course when he got to the door, Anna asked him to walk in, and he was not at all inclined to refuse. An hour quickly slipped by in talking over old times, and hearing of Frank's adventures at sea. It is difficult to say how much longer the visit would have lasted, if Sarah had not reminded him that Catharine and William would be looking for them for supper.

'Mother,' said Anna, the next day, 'Sarah wants me to go to tea there to-night, and I told her I'd go.'

'Very well,' said her mother; 'your father or George can fetch you home. We must ask Sarah and her brother to come here one night; how long does Frank stay?'

'Some weeks, I believe; but he doesn't quite know yet.'

Anna enjoyed her evening very much, and so did Frank, too; and although Anna's father fetched her home, Frank would not be satisfied without accompanying them.

The next day, however, Anna felt very restless; she could not, some how, settle to her work, but kept continually looking out of the window, as if she expected somebody; or would sit with her work indeed in her hands, but not getting on at all. Her mother did not notice it at first, for she was washing, and had other things to attend to, but when Anna had laid down her work for the third or fourth time, and gone to the window, Mrs. Hickley exclaimed,

'What are you about, Anna? what are you looking out for?'

'Nothing,' she replied, sitting down to her work again.

'Well, if you waste your time in that way, you'll not get much work done, I can tell you,' replied her mother.

This was true, but Anna only felt vexed with her mother for noticing her, and replied, in a hasty manner, 'I suppose I'm not to work like a slave.'

The moment she had uttered the words she was sorry, but she did not say so, and sat gloomily on over her work. She generally chatted to her mother every now and then, but this morning she never opened her lips, except when her mother spoke to her, and then gave very short answers. That evening, however, Sarah and her brother called and asked Anna to walk with them.

'I should think you can hardly spare the

said Mrs. Hickley. 'I don't think at the rate you've worked to-day, you'll have those gloves done when the master calls, unless you keep pretty steadily at them till then.'

'I'll make up for it another time,' she answered, hurriedly folding up her parcel of gloves, and running up stairs to put her bonnet on. And now Anna was cheerful enough, and not a little pleased by the attention Frank showed her. She was sure it must be his doing, asking *her* to walk rather than any of the other maidens, for Sarah would have chosen Emily or Margaret, nor was she mistaken. Frank had always liked her—he had often thought of her while he was away, though he was but a boy when he had left, and had only occasionally seen her since, and now that he had grown into manhood, and she near womanhood, his liking for her certainly increased, and he was pleased to come back and find her still regular at school, at church, and a Communicant; and he thought within himself that Anna would make him a very nice wife if he could win her love. This he set himself to do, and scarcely a day went by without his either sitting with Anna while she worked, or asking her to take a walk, generally accompanied by Sarah. All this was very pleasant to Anna, and neither her father nor mother objected to the intercourse. But as soon as the visit or the walk was over, then Anna felt discontented and unhappy, longing for the next meeting to come; and against this feeling she did not strive, but on the contrary, gave way to it so much, that it made her cross and irritable to her own family, and idle over her work. For a week or two this went on, and then the master came round for the gloves, and, as Mrs. Hickley had prophesied, Anna had not done nearly her usual quantity. The man complained, and Anna had to put up with small earnings, but this she did not feel so much, as Frank had given her a pretty new shawl,

and some other things; still Anna thought she would try to be more industrious, for she knew in the end she should suffer for her idleness. It was not so much the time her walks took, that made the difference, as Anna's listless way of working at other times; when, by an effort, she might have forced herself to be industrious; and much better it would have been for her in more ways than one.

The afternoon was closing in on the day the master had been round for the work, when, as usual, Anna heard the garden-gate open, and the quick step of Frank coming towards the house. She thought to herself she must not go walking, and the next moment Frank's hand was on the latch, the door opened, and he exclaimed,

'Come, Anna, on with your bonnet! Sarah will be here by the time you're ready; and it's a beautiful evening.'

All Anna's resolutions were gone in a moment, and she began to fold up her work, when, just then, her mother entered.

'You are not surely putting away your work already!' she exclaimed. 'It will never do, Anna; you really must not neglect your work, as you have done lately!'

Anna's cheeks burned, and a sharp answer was on her tongue's-end, but Frank prevented her by saying good-naturedly,

'Well, Mrs. Hickley, it's all my fault; but, then, I shan't be here very long, so you mustn't mind.'

'That's all very fine talking, Frank; but if Anna loses her employment, she'll rue the day, I know. She must do as she likes, but *I* should say she had much better give up her walk, and work as long as she can; there's an hour yet of daylight.'

Frank looked at Anna to see what she would say, and Anna's conscience was telling her she ought to mind her mother's wishes, this once at all events, and

give up her own pleasure; yet Anna did not do it: she only answered,

‘Well, Mother, I’ll stay at home to-morrow, and get on with my work. I must have a bit of a walk now, before its dark;’ thinking within herself, that it would be a shame to disappoint Frank and Sarah; and, without giving time for more words, she ran upstairs.

Perhaps if Anna could have looked into Frank’s heart that moment, she would not have returned with quite so light a heart, and fearless a smile, for he was thinking,

‘I wish Anna had minded her mother; I think it would only have been right;’ and he was questioning, within himself, whether *he* ought to say anything against her going. He thought not, however, as Mrs. Hickley said no more, and he knew Anna’s earnings were her own, and, therefore, she ought to judge for herself; still he could not help feeling he should have been better pleased if Anna had yielded, while he thought he would not call her away so often in future, but sit with her instead.

These thoughts made him walk for some time in silence, until Anna exclaimed,

‘What’s the matter, Frank? where’s your tongue gone?’ Sarah had now joined them, so of course Frank could not tell his thoughts, and began immediately to talk about other things, and, outwardly, all appeared as smooth and pleasant as usual; yet in truth Anna was not quite easy, Frank not quite like himself—not quite as open and free as usual.

The walk was over, and though Saturday night, Frank lingered late at Anna’s cottage, Sarah having turned into their house as she passed it, and Frank having gone on with Anna. However, at length he bade good-night, and Anna, forgetting that her brother depended upon her to get out his clothes for the next day, and some other usual employments, went

up to bed. Her mind was sadly dissipated—full of Frank, his words, and looks, and tones; and though she went through her usual form of prayer, and even tried to think what she had done wrong through the day, and remembered her angry feelings when her mother spoke, and other things, and confessed them, there was very little earnestness in what she was doing, and no determination to do better; she did not try to force herself to attend.

The next day, notice was given for the Holy Communion, and, as Anna listened to it, her heart mis-gave her that something was wrong with her. She had almost always welcomed the invitation, and at once felt that she should accept it; but now she somehow felt not fit—she could not fix her mind steadily on the thoughts of going. It was not that the knowledge of any particular sin held her back, but a general sense of unfitness.

As she walked up from church, Frank joined her, and almost his first words were,

‘I am so glad to hear of the Holy Communion next Sunday, Anna, it is so long since I have had an opportunity of going; and I am so glad we should go together.’

Anna did not know what to answer, for she had almost made up her mind she would not go, instead of determining, by self-examination, to find out what was the cause of her present feeling. Yet she did not like to say so, and Frank went on talking about it, and telling her of the death of the chaplain of their ship, which had prevented their having the Communion for a long time. Having seen her safely at home, he said good-morning, and Anna soon found herself alone in her own room; but she had not time to think then, for dinner was ready; then came afternoon school, then a walk with Frank, and all this time Anna was uncomfortable and undecided. Only one thing she had made up her mind about, the

few moments she was alone in her own room, and that was, that she would try and find out what was the matter—that she would not give up the idea of going to the Lord's Supper without having thought seriously about it; and this was a good resolve.

It was not, however, until after church in the evening, that Anna found the time she so much needed. For some reason, Frank would not come in; he said he had something to do at home. Anna wondered whether it was to think of the Communion for next Sunday, and had she been able to follow him home, she would have found herself not far wrong; at all events, *she* determined to take this opportunity.

• Oh! well it was for Anna that she had been taught what was required of those who come to the Lord's Supper; well it was that she neither turned from it without thought, or purposed to go to it without endeavouring to do her utmost to prepare for it.

At first, indeed, Anna found it most difficult to settle her thoughts; she had so long been allowing them freely to rove, that she seemed to have lost the power of controlling them; but this very difficulty helped to open her eyes to her fault. She saw how she had indulged herself, and then this brought to mind all her peevishness, idleness, disrespect to her mother, careless devotions, half repentances. Poor Anna at first was frightened, as one by one her faults came before her, and she felt as if there was nothing for it but to give up Frank altogether; as if it must be wrong to have anything to do with him, when it had thus led her all wrong; but, after a time, she became calmer, and thought that this could not be. Her father and mother did not disapprove of it; he was a good and steady young man, and therefore there was no reason why she should not love him. At length she came to see that her fault had been in thinking *only* of her pleasure, and not of her duty; in

letting his society drive out every other thought, and make her even careless in her examination and prayer, as well as in her daily duties; and when Anna once saw this, her course was plainer. She need not give up Frank, but she *must* not let her love for him make her neglect duties. She *must* do her daily work, and strive against being discontented and unhappy when he was out of sight; and to this, with tears for her past faults, and prayers to God to help her, she made up her mind.

The next day saw a difference in Anna. She was up much earlier than usual, and got two or three hours' work before breakfast. She spoke cheerfully to her parents at breakfast, and then sat down to work, and resolutely kept at it; and while she did so, she had time to carry on her self-examination, to find out the particulars of her faults, and to remember how little grieved she had felt about them at the time, even when conscious of them. In the afternoon, Frank came and sat with her, but he did not ask her to walk—he said he would not interrupt her work.

In her present state of mind, Anna felt this half-reproof, but she said nothing.

Anna worked so hard for the next few days, that she found she was making up for lost time, and had really got well forward with her work; but she was not quite happy. Every day she had spared a few moments for prayer and self-examination, in order to fit herself, as far as she could, for the Holy Communion of the next Sunday; but the more Anna thought about the last week or two, the more she felt how unworthy she was, and the more wrong her past conduct seemed to be. Her unhappiness showed itself in her manner to Frank, though she did not know it, and he feared that she was vexed with him for not asking her to walk. One afternoon, however, after he had been sitting with her for some time, (they

were now really engaged,) it grew so dark, she could not see to work, and at length she laid down her needle and sat silent, and presently heaved a deep sigh. No one else was in the room; for Mrs. Hickley had gone up into the town a few moments before.

'You are tired of work, Anna,' said Frank, kindly. 'I am afraid you think it strange I have not asked you to walk, but after what your mother said, I thought I had better not.'

'Oh, no, Frank! I've not thought you unkind. I wouldn't have gone, if you had asked me,' she replied. 'Oh, Frank! I was all wrong then, and now I'm so unhappy about it! You talked of our going together to the Holy Communion; and oh, Frank! I don't know whether I ought to go at all. I've been so very wrong!'

The ice was now broken, and long and earnestly the two talked together about it. Frank did not attempt to try and persuade her that she had been right, that she ought not to have tried to keep her mind in better order; but he did say he thought her faults ought not to keep her away, because she was now really sorry, and wished to do better. 'And surely, Anna dear,' he said, as he sat with her hand in his, 'we should go there to be strengthened to do better. Let us together offer ourselves to God, and ask Him to bless our union, whenever it may be, and I hope we shall not again be a hindrance to each other, but a help.'

Poor Frank felt that his mind, too, had been too much taken up with Anna. But there was a difference. *He* had striven against it, Anna had not, till the last few days.

The following Sunday saw them both kneeling at the Altar of God.



LESSON LXXX.

THE SACRAMENTS.

SELF-EXAMINATION ON REPENTANCE.

WE went rather too forward last Sunday in our history of Anna and Frank, and now we must go back again a few Sundays if we would join Miss Walton's lesson; and while we do so, you must not fancy that Anna was engaged to Frank, for it was, as I said before, some weeks after his arrival before he spoke, though, from the very first, he showed a liking for Anna above all the other maidens. The lessons on the Catechism were finished before Frank had spoken to Anna's father, and during that time Miss Walton had heard, indeed, whispers about it, but had not paid much attention to them, seeing Anna at the lessons as usual, though perhaps not always quite so attentive. Let us now join them the Sunday after Frank's unexpected arrival.

'We have seen that self-examination is a daily duty, and that it is also a special duty required—of whom?' asked Miss Walton.

Several. Those who come to the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Now to-day you shall tell me something of the first subject upon which all such are bidden to examine themselves. What is it?

Sarah. Repentance.

Miss W. And what have you often told me are the three parts of repentance?

Several. Sorrow, confession, and amendment.

Miss W. Then, in examining ourselves on repentance, we have to find out whether we are—what?

Emily. Sorry for our sins.

Miss W. Yes, and willing to confess them. And what else?

Anna. Whether we purpose to amend.

Miss W. Or, in the words of the Catechism, it is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper to—?

All. 'Examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins.'

Miss W. We are not to examine ourselves to see whether we are good, and may feel satisfied with ourselves, and think ourselves worthy to go to the Lord's Supper, but to find out—what?

Anna. Whether we repent us truly of our former sins.

Miss W. Whether we repent—how?

Several. 'Truly.'

Miss W. Yes, not with a half repentance, but whether we heartily sorrow, and are truly humbled. To what sort of a man does the prophet Isaiah say God will look?

Margaret. 'To him that is poor and of a contrite spirit.' (Isaiah, lxi. 2.)

Miss W. And in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, whom does He first declare blessed?

Several. 'The poor in spirit.' (St. Matt. v. 3.)

Miss W. And who does He promise shall be comforted?

Alice. 'Those that mourn.' (Verse 4.)

Miss W. And whom does He so especially invite to come to Him?

Agnes. 'All that labour and are heavy laden.' (xi. 28.)

Miss W. We do not, then, believe that God will

welcome us to His table because we are good, and have no sin, but—why?

‘Because we are heavy laden,’ said Mary.

Miss W. With what?

Margaret. The burden of our sins.

Miss W. And what must we feel about our sins?

‘Sorrow for them,’ said some.

‘We must mourn for them,’ said Rose.

Miss W. And what should we feel about ourselves when we think of them?

Mary. That we are unworthy.

Miss W. Yes, we should feel humbled in ourselves. And that we may be thus poor in spirit, the Church bids us—?

Several. Examine ourselves.

Miss W. We saw, last Sunday, that Christ does not invite those that are whole to come to Him, but whom?

Several. Those that are sick.

Miss W. Yes, and feel their sickness. And what of our sickness?

Several. Sin.

Miss W. And before we go to the physician, it is required that we should feel our sickness, and acknowledge it; therefore, what are we bidden to do?

Ruth. To examine whether we repent truly of our former sins.

Miss W. Yes, to examine ourselves, not to find out that we are in perfect health—that we have no sin; but whether we are really conscious of our sickness, and ashamed of it—whether we are really sorry for our sins, and acknowledge them, and—what else?

Jane. ‘Steadfastly purpose to lead a new life.’

Miss W. Would it be of any use for a sick man to know his illness, and confess that he is ill, and even send for the doctor, if he had no wish to be better, to intention of using the remedies?

Emily. No, he might as well not send for the doctor.

Miss W. So it is of no use that we should be conscious of sin, and acknowledge it, unless we also do what?

Several. Purpose to amend.

Miss W. And *how* must we purpose?

Bessie. Steadfastly.

Miss W. Supposing a sick man would not persevere in the remedies, or should take some, and refuse others, would it be likely that he would get well?

Margaret. No; he must go on with them, and take all, to get well soon.

Miss W. And this he is more likely to do if he is very anxious to get better. So we must purpose to amend *steadfastly*, and then what shall we do?

‘Use the remedies,’ said Rose.

Miss W. We shall gladly use all the help we can get. And how, above all other ways, are our souls strengthened and refreshed?

Jane. By ‘the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper.’

Miss W. We must, then, examine whether we be anxious to amend—steadfastly purpose to amend, that we may receive this strength. And as it is only promised to those who mourn, and feel their sins a heavy burden, we must examine whether we are among this number. What are we taught to say of our sins in the confession of the Lord’s Supper?

Sarah. ‘We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, Which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, By thought, word, and deed, Against Thy Divine Majesty.’

Miss W. And what do we profess to feel about them?

Margaret. ‘We do earnestly repent, And are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; The remembrance

of them is grievous unto us ; The burden of them is intolerable.

Miss W. Thus we profess ourselves to be the weary and heavy laden, whom Christ invites to come to Him ; and that we may be so *truly*, we are taught to examine ourselves whether we—?

All. Repent truly of our former sins.

Miss W. And, after asking for mercy, what do we pray that we may do hereafter ?

Anna. Serve and please God in newness of life.

Miss W. But before we do this we are taught to examine whether we—?

‘Steadfastly purpose to lead a new life,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Yes ; because, without this purpose, it is no use praying that we may do so. But can we be sorry for sins of which we know nothing, or which we have forgotten all about ?

Emily. No ; we must first find out our sins.

Miss W. And if we would renew our repentance for sins already discovered, what must we do ?

Agnes. Think of them again.

Miss W. Yes, call them to mind. Now when did you tell me we ought to try and find out our sins ?

Several. Every day.*

Miss W. Yes ; and I think every faithful communicant will do this, and not be satisfied with only doing it before going to the Lord’s Supper. But even if we do this, are we quite sure to find out every fault ?

Rose. No ; we may forget some.

Miss W. Yes ; so a special examination is still needful, that we may try and find out transgressions which we may have overlooked—when ?

Jane. At our daily examination.

Miss W. But supposing we do not overlook any,

* See Lesson lxxviii.

faults in our daily examination, still what should we examine about our former sins before going to the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. Whether we repent truly of them.

Miss W. Just so; whether we have been duly sorry for them, and are still humbled on account of them; because, if we are not humble, if we think ourselves whole, does Christ invite us to Him?

Rose. No; He invites the sick and contrite.

Miss W. Then when we begin to examine ourselves for the Lord's Supper, and recall our sins to mind, or discover new ones, our first question should be, 'Am I truly sorry for it?' 'Do I really feel humbled before God because of this my sin?' What did the publican feel when he went into the temple?

Sarah. That he was a sinner.

Miss W. And how did he show that he really felt his unworthiness?

Ruth. He stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven.

Miss W. And what else did he do?

Several. Smote upon his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' (See St. Luke, xviii. 13.)

Miss W. And because he was a sinner, was he rejected?

Rose. No, he went down to his house justified rather than the other. (Verse 14.)

Miss W. And why?

Agnes. Because he had humbled himself. 'Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

Miss W. Before going to the Holy Communion, what, then, must we do?

All. Humble ourselves.

Miss W. Yes; be truly and heartily sorry for every sin we remember. And if we are truly sorry, what will be the cause of our sorrow?

The girls did not answer, and Miss Walton said again,

‘Whom do we offend by our sin?’

‘God,’ they all replied.

Miss W. Why, then, shall we grieve over our sin?

Agnes. Because we have offended Him.

Miss W. Yes; we should try and sorrow most of all on that account. Why did Esau lift up his voice and weep when Isaac told him he had blessed another?

Anna. Because *he* had lost the blessing.

Miss W. Yes; not because he had sinned in despising—what, girls?

‘His birthright,’ said Rose.

Miss W. We are not led to suppose that he ever grieved over this till the consequence fell upon him—the loss of the blessing. His sorrow, therefore, was not true sorrow, for it was not for the sin he grieved, but for his own personal loss in consequence. Again, what made Judas repent of having betrayed his Master?

Several. ‘When he saw that He was condemned.’ (St. Matt. xxvii. 3.)

Miss W. He seems to have hoped that after all our Lord would have escaped, and that *he* would have had the money without our Lord’s suffering; but when he found the miserable consequence of his act, it is said that he—?

‘Repented himself,’ said Bessie.

Miss W. Yes; ‘repented’ is the word used in the English, but ‘regretted’, I have been told, is more the meaning of the Greek word. But was his true repentance?

All. No, Ma’am.

Miss W. No; for it did not humble him, and bring him to the foot of the cross. But what did he do?

Harriet. ‘Went and hanged himself.’ (Verse 5.)

Miss W. But how different was the sorrow of the Prodigal Son! What were his words of confession?

Alice. 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.' (St. Luke, xv. 21.)

Miss W. Once brought to a sense of his faults by his troubles and miseries, then his chief cause of sorrow our Lord represents to be—what?

Emily. That he had sinned against heaven and his father.

Miss W. Yes; that he had sinned against so much love, so many blessings. So why must we most of all sorrow?

Mary. Because we have sinned against God.

Miss W. Against God, Who has shown us so much love and kindness, Who has given His Son to die for us, and made us His children, and given us an inheritance. What, then, should we try to think of to make us truly sorry?

'God's love and kindness,' said Margaret.

Miss W. And did the prodigal's sorrow drive him away from his father?

Agnes. No, but to him.

Miss W. So where will true sorrow lead us?

Several. To our Father.

Miss W. Yes, with humble confession. Neither did the sin of the prodigal make him afraid to return, did it?

Anna. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. So must our sins make us afraid to go to the Lord's Supper?

Rose. No; Christ came to call sinners.

Miss W. The fatted calf was killed for the returning prodigal, and he was bid to sit down to the feast; teaching us that our sins must not keep us away from the Feast of the Gospel, that we are those for whom it is prepared, if only, like the prodigal, we are

truly humbled. Therefore we must examine ourselves whether we—?

All. Repent truly of our former sins.

Miss W. And what is the test of the truth of our repentance—what is further said?

Harriet. ‘Steadfastly purposing to lead a new life.’

Miss W. Yes; true sorrow will surely lead to this purpose. Look at the prodigal again. How had his past life been spent?

Several. In riotous living.

Miss W. Where?

‘Away from his father,’ said Agnes.

‘In a far country,’ said others.

Miss W. And once sensible of his faults, what did he purpose to do?

Several. Arise, and go to his father.

Miss W. And take what place in the household?

Ruth. A servant’s.

Miss W. How would his life then be spent?

Emily. In serving his father.

Miss W. Yes; no longer in riotous living in a far country, but in labouring for his father in his father’s house. What sort of a life, then, did he purpose to lead?

All. A new life.

Miss W. And this his purpose was steadfast, for what did he immediately begin to do?

Anna. He arose and went to his father.

Miss W. But you say it was a *far country* he was in; could he then at once reach his father?

Several. No, it would be a long journey.

Miss W. But did he change his mind in that journey?

All. No, Ma’am; he came to his father.

Miss W. And did he change his purpose of confessing himself unworthy of a son’s place?

All. No, Ma’am.

Miss W. Then what sort of purposes were his?

Several. Steadfast.

Miss W. Yes; through a long and painful journey, as it must have been, in his poverty and nakedness, his purpose remained unchanged;—though his father, in his abundant love, received him as ‘above a servant,’ a son beloved. So God will receive all who thus humbly go to Him, truly sorrowing that they have sinned against Him, looking upon themselves as only worthy to be—what?

Several. Servants.

Miss W. Yes; yet steadfast in their purposes of leading a new life in their Father’s household;—as His servants, because feeling themselves unworthy to be His sons. What do we confess ourselves unworthy to gather up in our prayers at the Lord’s Supper?

Emily. The crumbs under His table.

Miss W. Much less to eat the children’s bread; yet with what does God feed us?

Sarah. With the Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. Yes; with the true Bread from Heaven. But, girls, though we may purpose to lead a new life, are we *quite* sure we shall never do wrong again?

‘No, we can’t be that,’ said Rose.

Miss W. Why cannot we be?

‘Because we are weak, and fall into sin easily,’ said Margaret.

Miss W. Yes, however strong, and even steadfast on the whole, our purposes may be, still we fail; we do what is wrong, because we are weak or frail. What does one of the Collects teach us to say about this?

Rose. ‘O God, Who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright.’

Miss W. And what, therefore, are we taught ~~to~~ ^{to} pray?

Several. 'Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' (4th Sunday after the Epiphany.)

Miss W. However steadfast, then, our purpose, God knows—what?

Bessie. That because 'of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright.'

Miss W. Therefore while *we* purpose, what else must we do?

Anna. Ask Him for strength and protection.

Miss W. Yes, for protection against temptation, and strength to overcome it. Yet we say, God *knows* our frailty; is it, then, any reason why we should not go to the Lord's Supper? (The girls did not answer, and Miss Walton said again,) We are not bidden to examine whether we have never gone against our purposes, are we?

Anna. No, only whether we *do* purpose.

Miss W. Yes, that is the great matter, whether we do purpose, and that so earnestly as to try and live a new life very heartily; but if through frailty or sudden temptation we fall, we must not think we shall be rejected, that God will turn His face from us. The weaker we find ourselves to be, the more we need—what, girls?

Several. Strength and protection.

Miss W. And where do we most surely receive it?

Sarah. At the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Then must our weakness make us stay away?

Margaret. No, rather go.

Miss W. Yes; what we must be careful about, and examine closely, is, whether we *wish* to do better, whether we *intend to try*, however hard we know the battle may be. For instance, if a girl is *out at service*, and finds that she has got a habit of *hurrying over her prayers*, is that right?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Very well, a girl should be really sorry for this, and should, before going to the Lord's Supper, purpose—what?

All. Never to do it again.

Miss W. Yes, that should be her determination, although she may know it will be difficult not to do it, that she will have to be up a little earlier to accomplish it, and stay up a little later; still, if in spite of all these difficulties, she makes up her mind to do her best, then her purpose will be—what?

Several. 'To lead a new life.'

Miss W. But if, after all, some morning she should be very late, or some night very tired, and again say through the words in a hurried manner, would this prove that she never purposed to do better?

Mary. No, that she was weak.

Miss W. Yes, and this would prove how much she needed God's help—it would not prove that she was unfit to go to the Lord's Supper. And, after such a fall, what ought she to do?

'Be sorry again, and try again,' said Emily.

Miss W. Yes, and go again to the Lord's Supper for fresh strength; and this, though she fail again and again. *Only don't give up the steadfast purpose to do better, and the trying to do better, and then our frailty must not keep us away, but drive us to the Feast of strengthening Grace.* But, supposing when she first found out her fault she felt sorry, but thought within herself, 'I can't help it; I haven't time to do better; I would if I could, but I know I can't;' do you think with such thoughts as these she would receive any blessing at the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. No, that would not be purposing to lead a new life.

Miss W. Just so. Then, before going to the Lord's Supper, what must we examine?

Several. Whether we steadfastly purpose to lead a new life.

Miss W. Yes; and if we do this, and truly sorrow for all our short-comings, frail though we be, we may look for a blessing—feeling ourselves not worthy of the crumbs, we may yet draw near for the children's bread. I think we have an example among the Apostles themselves of the hearty purpose being accepted, notwithstanding frailty, and an after fall. Whom do I mean?

'St. Peter,' said little Agnes.

Miss W. Yes. We find, just after the Lord's Supper, our Lord warning His disciples that all should be offended—what did St. Peter answer?

Rose. 'Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.'

Miss W. And when our Lord went on to warn him that he would surely deny Him, what did he still reply?

Agnes. 'Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.' (St. Matt. xxvi. 31–35.)

Miss W. Yes; and with this purpose we must believe he had just partaken of the Body and Blood of Christ; yet what do we find him doing so soon afterwards?

Alice. Denying Christ three times.

Miss W. Sudden temptation, and his own frailty, made him fall, notwithstanding his purpose, his hearty purpose. But did he fall to rise no more?

Several. No, he repented, and wept bitterly.

Miss W. Yes, and purposed again to follow his Lord, and this time not in vain. What, then, may we believe was accepted when he sat at the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. His hearty purposes.

Miss W. Yes, and we may surely believe that there he received that strength which raised him up again. Our Lord prayed for him, and his faith failed

not, weak and frail though his purposes proved to be for the moment—not in the end, because he renewed them, and had grace indeed to live a new life. Far different was it with Judas—an awful example of the sin of going to the Lord's Supper with no purpose of leading a new life. What does St. Matthew tell us he had done before he went? Chap. xxvi. 14–16.

Harriet. 'Judas Iscariot went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.'

Miss W. Then with what purpose in his mind did he eat of the Lord's Supper?

Rose. With the purpose of betraying Christ.

Miss W. And even when our Lord warned him, did his purpose change?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No, on the contrary, St. John seems to say that the eating did nothing else but increase his damnation, for it was then that Satan took full possession of him. Look at St. John, xiii. 27.

Bessie. 'And after the sop Satan entered into him.'

Miss W. And what does he tell us in the second verse of the same chapter?

Ruth. 'Supper being ended, the devil *having now* put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him.'

Miss W. Having already put it into his heart. 'Satan had tempted him, and he had, as we learn from the other Evangelists, already made his agreement with the chief priests; but it was after the Supper that Satan took complete possession, and that Judas went immediately out to fulfil the agreement. It was then he thought the opportunity had come.'* And was there any rising again from his fall?

* See Plain Commentary on St. John, xiii. 2, and 27.

Several. No; he hanged himself.

Miss W. Yes; he had received no strength, no blessing at that Supper, for he went to it with no purpose of leading a new life, but, on the contrary, cherishing his sin. *He* fell, then, to rise no more. What, then, was the great difference between St. Peter and Judas?

‘St. Peter did not mean to do what was wrong,’ said little Ruth; ‘Judas did.’

Miss W. Very good; only St. Peter did more than merely *not intend* to do wrong—what did he truly purpose to do?

Several. What was right.

Miss W. Yes. It is not enough that we should have no intention of doing wrong when we go to the Lord’s Supper, but we must examine whether—?

‘We steadfastly purpose to do right,’ said Agnes.

Miss W. Yes; and the sin of Judas was worse than *not* purposing to do right, for he positively purposed to do wrong, so that he brought upon himself the awful doom, ‘He went to his own place.’ You learn, then, that frailty must not keep us away from the Lord’s Supper; yet for every sin what must we feel?

Several. Very sorry.

Miss W. And you learn that we must not dare to go to the Lord’s Supper unless we steadfastly purpose to do right—to give up sin, and lead a new life; therefore we must examine ourselves whether we—?

‘Do truly repent,’ said Margaret.

‘And really purpose to lead a new life,’ added others.

Miss W. Yes; and if you are really sorry, and do truly purpose, with God’s help, to do better, however frail you are, you are invited to ‘draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort.’

‘Please, Ma’am, can you read to us to-day?’ asked *Emily*, as *Miss Walton* closed her books.

‘Yes,’ she replied; ‘I will read to you to-day.’

For once, I believe, Anna would rather not have stayed, thinking that perhaps Frank would have asked her to walk, but she did not like to say anything, and sat still.

THE ELDER SISTER. (*Continued.*)

‘It is strange James does not write,’ said Katharine to her husband, as they sat together one evening. ‘It would be a great comfort to me to hear something of him.’

‘Oh! I heard to-day,’ said John, ‘that Mr. Bushman has been very ill, so I suppose James has had a great deal to do.’

‘Indeed! I am sorry to hear that. I think I’ll write to James to-morrow, and beg him to let us hear,’ returned Katharine.

‘Well, there could be no harm in doing that,’ said John, ‘or I think, perhaps, I could go over one day next week, and see James.’

‘That would be best of all,’ said Katharine. ‘You would then really see how things were going on.’

We, however, know something of how things had been going on for some time—how James, by allowing evil to which it was his duty to put a stop, was himself a partaker of it—how the society of the Tattlers, and his fancied love for Harriet, were leading him astray, and making it every day more difficult for him to be faithful to his master.

You will not, therefore, be surprised to be told, that late one evening, (before John had been able to fulfil his intention of going over to see James,) while he and Katharine were as usual sitting together, the cottage door was opened, and in walked James himself, looking so flushed and wretched, that both John and Katharine exclaimed,

‘Something is the matter! What is it, James?’

At first he seemed as if he could not answer; but on the question being anxiously repeated, in a hoarse voice he replied,

‘I’ve lost my situation.’

‘Lost your situation!’ they both exclaimed, one in a tone of sorrow, the other of displeasure.

‘Yes,’ he replied, sinking down on a chair which stood near. ‘Master has turned me away.’

‘What have you been doing?’ asked John, while James only covered his face, and said nothing.

‘Don’t ask him now,’ said Katharine kindly; ‘he’ll tell us when he’s had some tea;’ for Katharine saw that James could not speak, and she was afraid John might say something harsh.

‘I don’t want any tea,’ said James, in the same hoarse voice. ‘I’m not going to stay here and live upon you and John, though I have lost my situation.’

‘Oh! James, don’t say that!’ returned Katharine, putting her arm round her brother’s neck. ‘You know when you are in trouble we would share our last morsel with you. You know John and I will always befriend you;’ and she looked at her husband with an imploring expression, as much as to say,

‘Speak a kind word to him, whatever he has done;’ at least, so John understood it, and taking James’s hand, he said,

‘Nay, James, this will never do; don’t turn from your best friends in your trouble. I’m sure Katharine has always been like a mother to you, and we’ll do our best for you now, if only you’ll be open, and tell us all about it.’

These words of kindness from his sister and brother, who, in his misery, he had fancied could do nothing but blame him, quite overcame the poor fellow, and broke down all his previous resolutions; and tears, which had hitherto refused to come, now

broke forth; and when a man does cry, there is something very heart-rending in his tears—in seeing the strong frame shaken, the pent-up feelings burst forth, the independent spirit crushed for the moment. Very heart-rending it was to poor Katharine now, as her brother's head sank on her shoulder, and he sobbed for some time, unable to speak; her tears flowed with his, but she would not check him; she knew he would be better for giving way, and so he was, and then he suffered her to treat him as a little boy again. She got him some tea, and would not allow him to tell anything until he had drunk it, and eaten something; for James had walked all the way from his master's without taking anything.

John paced up and down the cottage, admiring his wife, and yet feeling half impatient with her, longing to know what James had been doing, and, in his ignorance, picturing things much worse than they were.

At length tea was cleared away again, and Katharine sat down by her brother, saying,

‘Now, James, will you tell us all? I know, if you say you *will*, that you will. I could always trust you.’

James felt these words a reproof, though Katharine was far from meaning them to be so. He replied,

‘You'll not trust me, Katie, I'm afraid, when I have told you all. Master said he would never trust me again’—adding vehemently, ‘But I will tell you all, that I'm determined,’ and he went on to give them the account of most that had happened since Andrew had been there, not hiding his own faults as far as he was then conscious of them. We, however, have but to learn the cause of his dismissal.

A little while before Mr. Bushman was able to return to his business, it seems an old customer called to see him, and happened to say,

‘It will be well when you are about again, Mr. Bushman, for I hear great complaints that people are not properly attended to in the shop.’

After this, Mr. Bushman spoke to James, and asked what these complaints meant; but even then he had not the courage to speak out plainly; the thought of Harriet, of what the Tatlers would say, made him silent; although now, more constantly than ever, James missed things out of the shop, and Andrew became less and less attentive to his business. There was something in James’s whole manner which dissatisfied Mr. Bushman very much, for James was not accustomed to deceive, and could not do it boldly. So dissatisfied was his master, that he afterwards sent for Andrew, and spoke to him. Andrew’s manner was quite different; he assured his master he was very sorry if there was any cause of complaint, and said perhaps it had arisen from his having to go out with parcels once or twice in the middle of the day, but he would try and have it remedied, and go after the shop was closed instead. At the same time, he told his master his half-year would be up in a fortnight, and he should be greatly obliged if he would allow him to leave then without the usual length of notice, as he had the day before heard of a situation near his own relations, which they were very anxious he should take, and asked if Mr. Bushman would give him a character.

Mr. Bushman felt quite sorry to lose him, but said he would not stand in his way if a better situation had offered, and that he hoped by that time to be about again himself.

Andrew said he would not, on any account, inconvenience Mr. Bushman, and would try and stay longer if he wished it, but he feared his new master would not wait.

The end of the conversation was, that Mr. Bushman wrote out a favourable character, as far, he

said, as in so short a time he could speak for him; and gave Andrew leave to consider himself free at the end of the fortnight.

It so happened that a nephew of Mrs. Bushman's was wanting a situation, and now Mr. Bushman thought he could offer him one, and, therefore, more willingly set Andrew free.

Well pleased, Andrew left his master, for he had now got all he cared for—a character. There was some truth in his story, for he had heard of another situation, though not near his relations; and with this character, and the influence of an old school-fellow in the same establishment, Andrew doubted not that he should be engaged.

After this, it seems that more complaints were carried to Mr. Bushman, and he was told that one of his young men was constantly out of the shop, and had many times been seen going into Mrs. Tatler's. Now Mr. Bushman knew what sort of people they were, and felt that it was against the character of any young man to associate with them; and he began to make inquiries as to *which* of his young men it was; and then he learned from the servant that James was constantly there, and had been home very late almost every night since Mr. Bushman's illness. All this confirmed him in the idea that James had neglected the shop, and that it was *he* who had been so often seen out; and very angry Mr. Bushman felt.

'I've trusted him, and he knows I have,' said Mr. Bushman to his wife, 'and he promised me to be home in good time; and then no sooner am I ill, than he's worse than ever. I've no confidence in him. If I had known he'd anything to do with those Tatlers, I'd have sent him away long ago.'

His wife tried to speak in James's favour, for she had always liked him, and said,

'After all, you don't know that he's been with

them in the day. I've never seen him out of the shop.'

'Very likely not. You don't go in very often; but I find he's not to be trusted; and I hear, at the same time, that constantly only one of the young men has been in the shop. What can I do but believe he has been in the habit of going out?'

'Well, don't decide anything against him till you are up, and able to look after things yourself,' said his wife.

'No, I won't for his sister's sake,' said Mr. Bushman; 'but I do feel very angry with him.'

It was not many days after this when Andrew put a little note into James's hand, after having been out of the shop for half-an-hour.

He opened it. It was from Harriet, begging him to step over for one moment, she had something very particular to say to him. At first, James thought he could not go, *he* would not leave the shop, whatever happened; but Andrew, knowing the contents of the note, asked,

'Well, aren't you going?'

'No,' he replied; 'I'll go in the evening, but I can't go now.'

'Oh yes, you can,' he said. 'What will Harriet think if you take no notice of her note? You cannot even send her an answer. It will only take you a minute. I'll take good care of the shop, I promise you.'

For some time James resisted, but his determination grew weaker and weaker as Andrew pressed the point, and represented how Harriet and all of them would feel if he didn't, until at length, with a sudden determination, he took up his hat, left the shop, and ran towards the house, where they contrived to detain him with one thing or another for some time, much longer than *he supposed*. Fancy, then, his consternation when, on returning, he found Mr. Bushman in the shop, and the first words said to him were,

‘Well, James, I’ve found you out when, I suppose, you least expected it. I understand now why you would not tell me the meaning of the complaints of the shop being neglected, for that it is you who have neglected it. May I ask, Sir, where you have now been?’

Roused to anger by his master’s severe manner, and the unjust accusation that he had been in the habit of neglecting the shop, he gave one glance towards Andrew, to see if he would have the uprightness to defend him; but finding he said nothing, answered his master,

‘I’ve not been out ten minutes, and I never left the shop before. I don’t see what difference it makes to you where I have been now.’

‘James, don’t say what is not true,’ said his master, very angry; ‘that is worse than all. It is one half-hour since I came into the shop, and you had gone then. I cannot believe a word you say when you meet me with a falsehood on your tongue. I can never trust you again, and I give you notice to quit my service.’

James waited to hear no more, but answering hastily,

‘You need not do that, for I’ll not stay another day,’ he hastily left the shop. Angry, not humbled, he walked along the street, and soon found himself opposite the Tatlers’ door. Some of the girls had seen him, and before he had time to consider whether to knock or not, the door was opened, and he walked in. At once he began to tell his tale in angry words, and did not see at first the altered looks of those around him; but on his calling Andrew a rascal, (for James hardly knew what he was saying,) they all turned upon him, and in a few moments more Mrs. Tatler stood with the door open, desiring him to walk out of the house, and never show his face there again, a penniless vag-

bond, as she called him. He looked towards Harriet, to see if she agreed to this, and a laugh was upon her face. Stung to the quick, he needed not a second bidding, and was soon hurrying along, he scarcely knew whither, until he found himself some way along the road towards his own home.

'Yes,' he thought, 'I'll go on and tell them how I have been used. I'll get John to settle it with that Bushman, and he shall repent what he has done;' and James quickened his pace, determining, far as the day was advanced, to reach home (as he still called it) that night.

During the hours, however, of that long, lonely walk, other and different thoughts came into his mind, as he recalled somewhat more calmly all that had happened during the last six months. Shame began to mingle with his anger, and regret, too, (I can hardly call it sorrow,) for his own conduct, excuses for his master's hastiness, and more and more bitterness towards those who had deceived and misled him, and now cast him off. And then to think that he should have allowed himself to be so taken in—that he should have cared for the flattery and opinion of such people! he felt to despise himself as he thought of it; and along with all this came, now and then, a tenderer thought of Harriet; surely she could not be like the rest. But, oh! that laugh!

James was nearly desperate, and twenty times he thought he would never show his face at home again; yet still he walked towards it, for the thought of Katharine drew him onward. He wished himself a little boy again, that he might tell all his troubles to her; and then again he thought,

'No, he could never do that.'

It was with such conflicting feelings working in him that he found himself at their gate, weary in body, still more weary in mind; and with a hasty

resolution that he would just tell them he'd lost his situation, bid them good-bye, and be off somewhere, he did not much care where, he opened the cottage door.

It was some days after this, when Katharine, after having finished cleaning up the house, and making herself tidy, took out her needlework, and sat down by James, who, for the last half-hour, had been sitting near the fire without speaking, and looking unhappy enough. Now, however, he was the first to break the silence, by saying,

'Katie, I see you are right, and I have been all wrong. I have not liked to say so before, but I have felt it for some days past.'

Since James had told his history that first night of his arrival, many conversations had taken place between him and Katharine, when she had tried to lead James to a truer sense of his faults than he appeared to have. Hitherto, however, he had seemed to be more vexed with himself than really sorry. He would call himself 'an ass' for being led by Andrew—for not telling his master at the very first; and sometimes would allow that the Tatlers were not worth a thought. At other times, he would defend them, and cling to Harriet, and be quite angry if Katharine tried to persuade him that, from his own account, Harriet could not be a fit wife for him, that she was not worthy of his love. Katharine had borne patiently these changing moods, and tried hard to lead her brother to look more closely into his conduct, and not to dwell so constantly on the consequences of it; and it was, I say, after sitting in thought for half-an-hour, or more, that he now addressed her.

'I am glad you feel that you have been wrong, James dear,' she replied. 'To see our faults is the first step towards curing them.'

'I wouldn't see them before, Katie; that's what has

led me wrong. Oh, you don't know how wrong I've been!

'There is One who knows, James dear, and it is for that reason I've wished you so much to see it yourself, that you may confess and be sorry for your sins against Him.'

James was silent for a moment, and then replied,

'If I had only thought of that before, Katie; I am afraid to think of it now;' and he covered his face, and almost shuddered.

'Oh, James, don't be a coward! take the pain which the thought of your faults gives you as a just punishment. Don't try and hide them from yourself and Him. You know how full and free are God's promises of pardon to those who are truly sorry.'

'I've been a coward for some time,' he replied; 'I've been afraid to think.'

'But you will not be so any longer. Do force yourself to think over each wrong act, that you may humble yourself before God, and calmly and steadfastly purpose, before Him, to do better. James dear, it is your only hope of getting right again—of doing better,' said Katharine, very earnestly.

'I know it,' he replied; and added hastily, 'I'll try and do it, Katie.'

'And you'll forgive me for speaking as if you were a little boy again?' said Katharine.

'Forgive you! Oh, Katie, I wish I was a boy again. You can't speak to me too plainly. If you'd been near me, I should never have gone so wrong.'

'There was One near you better than I,' said Katharine, very seriously. 'Do you know, James, that I always feared for you?'

'Oh, why, Katie? I didn't fear for myself,' he replied, with some surprise of tone.

'No; if you had, you would not have turned away from the strength God offers to us in the Holy Communion, James. I always think that any one who

does that, must be weak against temptation. You turned away, and so I always feared for you.'

James did not answer, and for some time they both sat in silence, which was interrupted by the entrance of little Martha, who had been on a message for her sister. Soon afterwards, James got up, and left the house.

'That must do for to-day, girls,' said Miss Walton. 'I hope poor James will not shrink from the bitterness of repentance.'

LESSON LXXXI.

THE SACRAMENTS.

SELF-EXAMINATION ON FAITH.

THE whole class were assembled as usual, and Miss Walton asked,

‘What is required of them who come to the Lord’s supper?’

Ruth. ‘To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sin, steadfastly pursuing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God’s mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance His death; and be in charity with all men.’

Miss W. What, then, is the second subject for self-examination?

Several. Faith.

Miss W. Are we told in the Bible to examine ourselves on this subject?

Anna. ‘Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.’ (2 Cor. xiii. 5.)

Miss W. And are we ever told that we *must* have faith if we would please God?

Rose. Yes; ‘Without faith it is impossible to please Him.’ (Heb. xi. 6.)

Miss W. Therefore we are to examine ourselves whether we have faith in God’s mercy through Christ—but what sort of a faith?

Emily. ‘A lively faith.’

Miss W. We are not only to have faith, but a *lively* faith. Now what do you mean by a lively

faith? (The girls did not answer, and Miss Walton said again) What do you mean by a lively child?

'A child with a great deal of life in it,' said Rose.

Miss W. Then a lively faith is faith with—?

'Life in it,' said one or two.

Miss W. Yes, a living faith. And how do you know whether a thing has life in it or not? Supposing you saw a bird lying on the ground, and you went up to it and touched it, and found it did not move, that its limbs were stiff and cold, what would you know the bird to be?

'Dead,' they all exclaimed.

Miss W. But supposing, when you approached it, that it moved its head, or its wing, what would you know?

Several. That it was alive.

Miss W. Yes; but if it still lay there, what would you think about it?

Ruth. That it was hurt, poor little thing!

Miss W. True, that it was alive, but hurt. If, on the other hand, the moment you came near it it flew away, what would you know?

Margaret. That it was alive, and strong.

Miss W. Now cannot you tell me how you know whether a thing has life or not?

'By whether it can move or not,' said Rose.

Miss W. Very good; life is shown by action, and the more action there is, the more life you judge there is. A very active child, you would say, was full of—?

'Life,' they replied.

Miss W. Yes, and a bird able to fly about at will, you know to be—?

Anna. Alive and strong.

Miss W. And even a tree you know to be living by—what?

Bessie. The leaves and buds upon it.

Miss W. But, on the other hand, if a child is

scarcely able to move, or only just breathing, you would say—?

‘It is nearly dead,’ said one or two.

Miss W. That its life was weak and almost gone ; and if a tree put forth but few leaves, you would say—what ?

Several. It was dying.

Miss W. And if a child ceased to move its limbs entirely, and the heart ceased to beat, you would then know that—what had gone from it ?

‘Life,’ they replied.

Miss W. And if a tree ceases to put forth leaves and buds, we say—?

Jane. It is dead.

Miss W. Yes, it has no life left in it. Action, then, is the sign of what ?

‘Life,’ they all replied.

Miss W. How, then, are we to judge whether our faith is lively, or living faith ?

Several. By seeing whether it makes us act.

Miss W. Quite right ; our faith must make us *do* something, or it is not—what sort of faith ?

Several. A lively faith.

Miss W. What sort of a faith does St. James call a dead faith ?

Margaret. ‘Faith without works is dead.’ (St. James, ii. 20.)

Miss W. That is, faith that does nothing ; and what sort of faith does St. Paul tell us availeth, or is alone of any worth ? Look at Gal. v. 6.

Harriet. ‘For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision ; but *faith which worketh by love.*’

Miss W. *Faith must work.* Now if you will look at the examples given of lively faith in Heb. xi. you will see how its life was shown by action, by doing something. How did Abel show his faith ?

Emily. By offering up a ‘more excellent sacrifice than Cain.’ (Verse 4.)

Miss W. His sacrifice showed that he had a deeper and truer faith in God than Cain had. How did Noah show his faith?

Several. By building the ark. (Verse 7.)

Miss W. What had he faith in?

Mary. God's threatening to drown the world.

Miss W. Yes, and the life of his faith was shown by his acting upon it. Again, Abraham?

Ruth. By going into the strange country when God called him. (Verse 8.)

Sarah. By offering up Isaac.

Miss W. Yes, look at verses 17, 18, 19.

Alice. 'By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac . . . of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.'

Miss W. His faith in God's promise was so strong, that he feared not to offer up his only son, in whom the promise was to be fulfilled. And by this action, what did he show?

Several. That his faith was lively.

Miss W. So you will see it is with all the rest mentioned in this chapter. I think it would be a pleasant employment for you this evening to read it through, and see how the life of their faith was proved by—what?

Rose. Their actions.

Miss W. Yes, how it made them do things they would not have done if their faith had been dead, or weak. So, if we would find out whether we have a lively faith, we must examine whether or not it makes us—?

'Act,' said some.

'Do anything,' said others.

Miss W. Very good. But in what are we especially to have this lively faith?

Jane. In God's mercy through Christ.

Miss W. Now all God does for our good is mercy.

Can you tell me why? With a little help you can, (said Miss Walton, as the girls did not answer.) Supposing a traveller attacked by a robber and overcome, begs the man to spare his life and let him go, even if he robs him; if the robber listens to his request, and lets him go, has he shown mercy?

Most of the girls answered 'Yes.'

'Why,' continued Miss Walton, 'did the traveller *deserve* to be killed?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Then in sparing him, the robber does not show *mercy*. Pity he may be said to show, but not *mercy*, because in granting him life and liberty, he only gave what the traveller had a right to claim, and force from him if he were able. But now, supposing the traveller overcame the robber, who in his turn begs for life and liberty, begs not to be punished, would he *deserve* to have his request granted?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Could he claim his freedom as a right?

'No, for he deserves punishment,' said several.

Miss W. What, then, would the traveller show, if he set the robber at liberty instead of having him punished?

'Mercy,' said Agnes.

Miss W. Why would his act, but not the robber's like it, be mercy?

Several. Because the robber would not deserve to be let off.

Miss W. Mercy, then, is a kindness shown which we do not—?

'Deserve,' said one or two.

Miss W. Quite right. Then why are all the good things God gives to us, and does for us, mercy?

Rose. Because we don't deserve them.

Miss W. And why don't we deserve them?

All. Because we are sinners.

Miss W. Very well. Now God shows us mercy

in two ways, by *giving* and *forgiving*, in both which ways we ask Him to show it in the Lord's Prayer. What do we ask Him to *give* us?

Bessie. Our daily bread.

Miss W. And what do we ask Him to *forgive* us?

Several. Our trespasses.

Miss W. I will first ask you some questions on this second way of God's showing mercy—How is it?

All. By forgiving us our sins.

Miss W. What have we been taught we are to examine about our sins?

Emily. Whether we truly repent of them.

Miss W. Yes, but this repentance would but lead to despair, if we did not believe in—what?

'God's mercy,' said some.

'God's willingness to forgive,' said others.

Miss W. Just so. Had Judas this faith?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Therefore, when he became sensible of his guilt, and was sorry for it in a measure, what did it lead him to do?

Alice. To hang himself.

Miss W. Yes, in despair. It will ever be so; a sense of our guilt will lead us to hopelessness and despair, unless with it we have also—what?

Jane. Faith in God's mercy.

Miss W. Right, which will lead us in our sorrow and guilt to Him, not away from Him. Did St. Peter's guilt and sorrow keep him away from his risen Lord?

Rose. No, he was one of the first at the sepulchre.

● *Miss W.* Yes, looking for Him whom he had so deeply offended. Every time our Lord appeared to His disciples, we find St. Peter among them clinging to Him. What, then, must St. Peter have had faith in?

'God's mercy,' said some.

'God's forgiveness,' said Mary.

Miss W. God's mercy, shown in His forgiveness. If he had felt that his sin would not be forgiven, he would not have dared to present himself before his offended Lord. To grief for our sins, then, we must add—?

Sarah. Faith in God's mercy.

Miss W. Shown in—?

Agnes. Forgiving us our sins.

Miss W. Therefore what are we bid to do before going to the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. To examine ourselves whether we have faith in God's mercy.

Miss W. As we profess to have every time we say the Creed—in what words?

Anna. I believe in 'the forgiveness of sins.'

Miss W. But how are we to believe that this forgiveness reaches us?

Several. Through Christ.

Miss W. Yes; it is not a mere feeling that God is merciful which we are to have, but we must believe that this mercy was purchased for us—by Whom?

All. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. And reaches us only—?

Several. Through Him.

Miss W. Through Him who was called JESUS. Why?

Margaret. Because He should save His people from their sins.

Miss W. Yes, from the *guilt*, from the power, and from the punishment of their sins. Therefore, in the 'comfortable words' spoken to us at the Lord's Supper, after the invitation given to the weary and heavy laden, of what are we reminded?

Emily. That 'God so loved the world, that He gave His *only-begotten Son*, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

Miss W. Then we do not perish in our sins—why?

Alice. Because God gave His only-begotten Son for us.

Miss W. Yes; and so mercy, shown in forgiveness, reaches us—?

Anna. Through Him.

Miss W. But what is required of us that we perish not, though He has been given?

Mary. That we believe in Him.

Miss W. In what words, too, does St. Paul teach us that mercy reaches sinners through Christ?

Rose. 'This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.'

Miss W. And how can we receive this truth?

Mary. By faith.

Miss W. And what does St. John say?

Bessie. 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins.' (See Com. Service.)

Miss W. Then to sorrow for sin we must add—?

All. 'Faith in God's mercy through Christ.'

Miss W. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saves us. And what has Christ done to purchase this mercy for us?

'Died for us,' said several.

'Suffered on the cross for us,' said Rose.

Miss W. And what is the Lord's Supper appointed to commemorate, or keep in memory?

Margaret. 'That His precious death.'

Miss W. Yes, we take and eat in remembrance that Christ died for us, to purchase forgiveness for us. We profess to look upon Him as the propitiation for—what?

Several. Our sins.

Miss W. Therefore it is needful before doing this to be quite sure we believe it, or we shall be mocking

God. To secure this, what does the Church bid us do?

Sarah. To examine ourselves whether we have a lively faith in God's mercy, *through Christ.*

Miss W. And how will a lively, or living faith, show itself?

Several. By our actions.

Miss W. Yes. How, then, will faith in Christ as our Saviour, through Whom forgiveness reaches us, make us act? Will the sins for which you are sorry drive you away from God?

Agnes. No, make us go to Him, like St. Peter.

Miss W. For what purpose?

Several. To ask for pardon.

Miss W. And if you have faith in Christ, *why* will you ask for pardon?

Mary. Because He has died.

Miss W. Yes, not because you deserve it, nor only because you have a feeling that God is merciful, but because you *know* and *believe* that Christ has died for you, and that His blood can do—what for you?

Margaret. Cleanse us from all sin.

Miss W. If we would find out, then, whether we have this lively faith, we must examine whether we do this, whether, whenever we are conscious of sin, and burdened with it, we go to our Father, and ask for pardon through—?

'Jesus Christ,' they all continued.

Miss W. But you say God not only shows mercy in forgiving, but in what other way?

Several. In giving us good things.

Miss W. And we must look upon every good thing which God gives us as a mercy. Why?

Margaret. Because we are sinners, and do not deserve any good thing.

Miss W. In ourselves we do not. Must we, then, give up all hope of receiving any good things from God?

All. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. How, then, must we believe that they will reach us?

Rose. In Christ.

Miss W. We are children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven, as—what?

All. Members of Christ.

Miss W. Yes, as being united to Him; and if we need any spiritual blessing, we must look for it—how?

Several. Through Jesus Christ.

Miss W. If God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, what may we further believe?

Agnes. That He will with Him freely give us all things. (See Rom. viii. 32.)

Miss W. And this we must believe, while we acknowledge our own unworthiness. For what are we to purpose before we can receive worthily the Lord's Supper?

Several. To lead a new life.

Miss W. But can we lead a new life in our own strength?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. Well, if we feel this, and yet do not believe that God will help us, we should give up in despair. But how does St. Paul say we can do all things?

Ruth. 'Through Christ which strengtheneth me.'

Miss W. And how are strength and refreshment conveyed to our souls?

Sarah. By the Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. But by whom alone are His Body and Blood received?

Several. The faithful in the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes, or by those who go in—?

'Faith,' they replied.

Miss W. 'According to your faith be it unto you, our Lord has said; therefore, if we need strength

and refreshment, and would obtain them—how must we go for them?

Several. In faith.

Miss W. Truly; we must believe that the blessing of strength and refreshment comes to our souls through Christ—in partaking of Him. And how do we partake of Him?

Mary. In receiving with faith the Bread and Wine of the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Therefore, lest we lose the blessing, what is required of us before going to His Supper?

Alice. To examine ourselves whether we have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ.

Miss W. That so going in faith, we may, by God's mercy, receive strength and refreshment, and so be enabled to fulfil our purposes. To purpose to lead a new life without believing in God's merciful willingness to help us through Christ, would be trusting to ourselves, leaning upon ourselves. But what says our Blessed Saviour of the branches of the Vine?

Ruth. 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' (St. John, xv. 5.)

Miss W. Ye can bear no fruit. And what does He say further in verse 7?

Anna. 'If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.'

Miss W. But we must abide in Him; we must receive life and strength from Him. And how can we best do this?

Margaret. By receiving His Body and Blood.

Miss W. What are we told are the benefits of receiving this Sacrament with a true penitent heart, and lively faith?

Several. 'Then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us.'

Miss W. These are the blessings mercifully given—to whom?

Mary. The faithful in the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes, given through Christ, or in partaking of Him. In going, then, to receive these blessings, in what must we believe?

Several. God's mercy through Christ.

Miss W. Mercy shown to us, not only in forgiving us our sin, but in—?

Agnes. Giving us blessings.

Miss W. Yes, the blessings of strengthening and refreshing grace in the Lord's Supper; but given according to—what?

Several. Our faith.

Miss W. We must then examine whether or no this faith is lively—whether we do go believing we shall have a blessing. And, I think, if we look closely at the faith of the Centurion, we shall be better able to judge if our faith be lively. What does our Lord say of it? Do you remember?

Ruth. 'I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.'

Miss W. What sort of a faith, then, had the Centurion?

All. A lively faith.

Miss W. In what?

Several. God's mercy.

Miss W. Now turn to St. Luke, vii. 1, and see how his faith showed its life. His servant was sick; what did he do?

Jane. Sent to Jesus, to beseech Him to come and heal him.

Miss W. His faith, then, did not allow him to be inactive; it made him—?

'Do something,' said Rose.

Miss W. And that something was to ask for the blessing he wanted. So, if we have a lively faith in

God's mercy shown in *giving*, what will it lead us to do?

Several. Ask for what we want.

Miss W. It will lead us to pray to God. •But did the Centurion think our Lord's bodily presence necessary for the healing of his servant?

Bessie. No. When Jesus was not far from the house, he sent messengers, saying unto Him, 'Lord, trouble not Thyself: for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee: *but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.*'

Miss W. The strength, or life of his faith, then, was shown in believing not only in our Lord's power of healing with a touch—but how?

Anna. With a word.

Miss W. Yes; he believed that our Lord's *word* was enough, and therefore he acted upon his faith, and sent messengers to stop His coming further. Now this is indeed the faith required of us in coming to the Lord's Supper, which we should examine whether we have. What do we *see* given to us to eat and drink?

Emily. Bread and wine.

Miss W. But what has Christ's *word* said: it shall be to us?

All. His Body and Blood.

Miss W. Well, then, if our faith is lively, shall we doubt this?

Agnes. No; we shall believe His word, like the Centurion.

Miss W. Just so. If our faith is lively, we shall not ask, 'How can these things be?' but shall fully believe—why?

Several. Because Christ has said it.

Miss W. And did Christ work His miracle according to the faith of the Centurion? Look what St. Matthew tells us in chap. viii. 13.

Harriet. 'Go thy way : and as thou hast believed, so 'be it done unto thee.'

Miss W. So the Church teaches us that the blessings of this Supper are for the faithful. Most necessary, therefore, it is, that we should examine ourselves whether we have—?

All. 'A lively faith in God's mercy through Christ.'

Miss W. Yes, whether our faith will lead us to go to Him and ask for what we want; to seek for it through Christ, through partaking of His Body and Blood; whether we believe that according to His word so it shall be, though we know not how, nor stop to inquire. And if, on examination, we find our faith is weak, and we need to have it strengthened, must we, therefore, turn away?

Margaret. No; go to have it strengthened.

Miss W. If the increase of faith is the blessing we need, we should seek for it in the Lord's Supper with the prayer of the distressed father, 'Lord, I believe'—?

'Help Thou mine unbelief,' said several. (St. Mark, ix. 24.).

Miss W. If our faith has life enough in it to lead us to Christ, we should cherish it by going to Him, and He will not turn away, as He turned not away from this doubting father, or from the leper, who, while he believed in Christ's power, doubted His willingness. Do you remember his words?

Sarah. 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.'

Miss W. And what did Jesus answer?

Several. 'I will; be thou clean.' (St. Matt. viii. 2, 3.)

Miss W. And do you think the leper would ever doubt Christ's willingness again?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. So let us go to Christ for increase of

faith, and strive to stir it up ourselves by thinking over all His love and power shown in past mercy to us or to others. We must examine ourselves that we lose not a blessing by careless and wilful unbelief, or weakness of faith; but if our examination prove to us that the life of our faith is weak, while we humble ourselves for our faults, and strive by meditation to quicken our belief, we must still go to Christ, that it may be strengthened, and cry with St. Peter, 'Lord, save me.' How did our Lord answer this cry?

Several. He 'stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' (St. Matt. xiv. 30, 31.)

Miss W. So will He stretch forth His hand to us if we only go to Him, and cry to Him, and do not let our doubting make us turn from Him.

THE ELDER SISTER. (*Continued.*)

THE day after James returned home, John wrote to Mr. Bushman, saying how sorry he was to hear of his brother's conduct, and that he would go over shortly and see Mr. Bushman, and fetch away James's clothes.

From James's account both John and Katharine thought that Mr. Bushman had acted rather hastily in giving James notice, though they also saw how wrongly he had acted in coming away so hastily; and much they wanted him to go back and humble himself to his master, and explain all the circumstances; but to this James at first would not listen. He said it would be mean to turn against Andrew now, and look like spite, and he could not tell his master anything and not tell him all. John saw there was some truth in what James said, and some good feeling; still he thought he ought to tell, and not allow his old master to be defrauded longer.

'I think,' he said, 'you ought to bear to be thought mean—it is part of the natural consequence of your former want of courage, and but a just punishment.'

James, however, was not yet sufficiently humbled to see and allow this, and bear the consequence patiently, and so things were obliged to be left to take their own course, and nothing had been heard from Mr. Bushman when the conversation passed between Katharine and James, of which you have already been told. James, if you remember, had promised his sister that he would try and think seriously over his conduct, and he kept his word. When he left the house it was to go alone, and some hours passed before he was seen again. He had gone out of the cottage intending to walk along the road, and think in quiet, and he had turned his steps towards the church, without any particular purpose, and soon found himself leaning on the church-yard gate; but his thoughts had hitherto been distracted by passing objects, and he felt dissatisfied with his endeavour. Happening to look up, he saw the church door open, and remembered that Mr. Benson had given orders that it might be left so, for the use of any one who liked to go into it for meditation and prayer. It was the very place he wanted, and James opened the gate, and walked into the sacred building. No one was there, and in the twilight it looked calm and solemn. He sat down on one of the seats near the door, and began again to try and collect his thoughts. It was not so hard now, and his wrong actions rose up before him, but still confusedly, without order; and James was beginning to despair, when he remembered the words of the 139th Psalm, 'Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' James sank upon his knees and

•

uttered these words with real earnestness, nor did he rise again quickly; but now, with his face buried in his hands, thought over his conduct from the time Andrew had come to the day of his own dismissal; and as he saw how he had gone astray, like a lost sheep, how one sin had been added to another, how he had put away thought, and got deeper and deeper into sin and difficulty, poor James felt ready to despair. But once more he began to consider how all this had come to pass, when he had gone to his situation really intending to do right, and to be faithful to his master, and regular in his religious duties, as he had been accustomed to be all his life; and Katharine's last words rose up before him.

Yes, he had neglected to use God's offered strength—he had turned away from the Holy Communion after his confirmation—he had thought himself sure to stand without it. *This, then*, he now saw was the beginning of what was wrong. He had been weak because he had not sought for strength, and not only had he turned away from the Lord's Supper, but, by degrees, week-day Church had been neglected, then Sunday, then his private prayers had been hurried over, and self-examination given up. Yes, James saw plainly enough the cause of his fall. He had been acting like a lame man, who, refusing the support of his friend, should immediately throw away first one crutch, then another, then reject an offered staff, and yet expect to be able to walk along a steep, stony, narrow path without stumbling and falling. James saw this now, and did not try to make excuses; he felt self-condemned. But as he thus knelt in humility and sorrow before God, hardly daring to ask for mercy, the clock struck seven, and he heard footsteps approaching the church, and in a moment or two more the sexton entered to light the *candles for evening service*. James had risen from *his knees*, but he sat still, thinking he would remain

for service; and in a quarter of an hour a little congregation were assembled, and in almost the same spot where Charles had once before confessed his sin, and heard the message of forgiveness, now stood James, cast down by the thought of how grievously he had gone astray ever since he was last in that church—since he stood by his father's grave. *Then* he had, as it were, only taken the first step or two in the forbidden path, *now* he had almost lost his way.

But was he, therefore, to despair? Was there no remedy? The first words which met his ears answered this question, as Mr. Benson began to read,

'When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him,' &c.

With God there was mercy—God, through Christ, would accept his sorrow, would listen to his confession, and he must turn away from the wickedness which he had committed, and do that which is lawful and right.

It was about an hour from this time when James once more opened the cottage door and joined his sister and brother, neither of whom had been able to go to prayers that night, though they often did.

'Well, James dear, how late you are!' said Katharine, cheerfully; 'we've done tea, but I have saved some for you.'

'Oh! I'm sorry you should have had that trouble,' said James; 'I didn't think of tea, and stayed for the service.'

'Indeed, I'm glad you did,' said Katharine; 'it's of no consequence. We have sometimes been obliged to wait for our tea till after church, but we could neither of us get there to-night.'

‘I had forgotten there was service, though I used so often to go with you, Katie, when I was a boy,’ he replied. ‘I could find in my heart to wish those days could come back; I mean that I was the same now as then.’

‘I suppose we all feel that of our childish days sometimes,’ said John; ‘and yet if we are only walking along the right road, every day we live brings us nearer to our journey’s end.’

‘Ay, that’s the point,’ said James; ‘if we are walking in the right way: but I’ll tell you plainly, John, I feel that I’ve been walking along the wrong road for some time past, but, if it please God to help me, I’ll begin this night to try and get back to the right one.’

‘And God will help you,’ said John, warmly, ‘if you fail not to ask Him.’

‘You told me, Katie, this afternoon,’ James continued, not caring for his tea, which stood at his side, ‘the cause of all my weakness, and I believe you are right. Am I wrong now (far as I have gone astray,) in making up my mind, with God’s help, to prepare for the Lord’s Supper? I know my past life has made me more than ever unfit—but am I *so* unfit that I must not think of it?’ he asked, with great earnestness.

‘Oh, James, I feel as if it were not for me to answer that question,’ she replied. ‘You should go to those better fitted than I am to advise you.’

‘But tell me, Katie, what you *think*. I don’t mean to go very soon. I know I must prove my repentance first, but I feel as if refusing to go there after my confirmation was the beginning of my false steps, and I feel as if I ought to make up my mind to undo that false step first of all; and yet, after all I’ve done, it seems presumptuous like to *think of it*.’

‘No, James, I don’t think it is. I don’t think

you are wrong to make up your mind to *try and prepare*, and you remember how the Catechism tells you to do it?

'The last answer, you mean?'

'Yes,' she replied. 'To examine yourself whether you have true repentance, and really mean to do better, and whether you have faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of His death, and be in charity with all men.' James did not reply, and John added,

'Such a preparation as this will take much time, and thought, and prayer, especially if we have neglected examination for any length of time.'

'Yes, John, I know that,' said James. 'All I want to feel sure about is, that I'm not wrong in thinking about it now. I have been wrong, very wrong for the last six months or more: I knew not how wrong until this last hour or two,' and poor James seemed as if he could hardly speak, and yet he forced himself to go on. 'At first I felt almost to despair, but I stayed the service, and after that I couldn't despair; and I thought, wrong as I have been, perhaps God would now accept my resolution to do better, and that I might make the resolution even *now* to go some day to the Lord's Supper; indeed, as if I ought to make the resolution to go as soon as I can. But perhaps I've been too careless, too sinful even to think about it.'

'No, James, I think you are right,' said John, 'if at once you set to work to amend your sinful life.'

'I'll tell you what I thought I'd best do,' said James. 'I thought I would go over to-morrow morning and see Andrew first, and see if I cannot persuade him to confess to Mr. Bushman; and if he won't, I must let him know that I feel obliged to tell all, for that I cannot acknowledge my own share in it without. I know he'll say it's all spite, but I can-

not help that. I've brought it upon myself. Don't you think that is what I ought to do?"

'Yes,' said John, warmly; 'and I'll go with you, if I can manage it. I'm glad to see you feel that you ought to acknowledge that you've been in fault to your master.'

'I've thought so for some time,' he replied; 'but I could not make up my mind to it.'

The next morning, however, brought a letter from Mr. Bushman, which astonished James not a little. It was addressed to Katharine, and said that he had taken stock just before Andrew had left, and had found many things gone, of which there was no account; and, painful as it was to him, he was obliged to suspect James, and that his hurrying off in the way he had done confirmed his suspicions. He begged Katharine to try and bring James to confession, and ended by saying,

'I felt as if I had dealt rather hastily with him, when my anger cooled down, in giving him notice on the spot, and was inclined to regret it; but now what can I think? I am sorry for the young man's own sake, and I am sorry for yours, that all this has happened, and that he should so little act up to all the good teaching I know you have given him; and, for your sake, I do not wish to make a public case of this, if only he will confess it and clear Andrew, who said to me, "Unless you prove it, Sir, against James, it seems to rest between us." I promised him to do what I could to clear up the matter, and if you can help me, without my making more public investigation, I shall be very glad, for, indeed, I do not wish to ruin James's prospects for ever.'

'Well, this beats all!' said James, when he read the letter. 'I'll not stand this an hour longer than I can help!' and his face flushed up with anger.

'It is hard for you, James,' said Katharine, 'but you must not be angry. Have you not brought it

upon yourself? Think a little before you say more about it.'

James did think, and presently replied, 'Yes, I see. It is only natural he should suspect me, but it's too bad—that Andrew is a thorough scoundrel, and is off now, I suppose no one knows where.'

'You will try and be patient, won't you, James?' said Katharine, standing opposite to him, putting her hands upon his shoulders, and looking into his face. 'Perhaps you'll not be able to clear yourself. Perhaps this may be part of your punishment. Think of it in this way, will you, James dear?'

'Thank you, Katie, for reminding me of this,' he replied, gently. 'I ought not to have forgotten it. Oh! it is much easier to intend to do right than to do it.'

'You must ask God to help you, James, and you must *expect* a struggle,' and having said this, Katharine turned away to her work again, while James sought the quiet of his own room.

Presently he heard John's voice, who had fixed to be home from his work by eleven o'clock, get something to eat, and start off with James to Mr. Bushman's; and now he had come in for that purpose, and his wife handed him the letter.

'I think Bushman should not be so ready to suspect James,' he remarked, laying down the letter; 'I think he judges hastily. I hope Jim will be able to bring the thefts home to Andrew.'

'Perhaps it will be better not to try,' said James, as he came into the kitchen, in a very different tone to that in which he had spoken about it before. 'I'll tell master all the truth; it's for him to look into it, not for me. If he doesn't believe me, I can't be surprised after what is past, and I must bear it.'

'Well, we'll talk that over as we go along,' said John. 'But let's be off now.'

In half-an-hour they were on their way.

LESSON LXXXII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

SELF-EXAMINATION ON THANKFULNESS.

THE first-class girls were going up to the Vicarage for their usual Sunday afternoon lesson, and with them was a second-class girl, named Emma Arkwright. She was fourteen years old, and yet very backward in her reading, for she had been kept much at home, and was naturally dull; yet she was a good and steady girl, and took pains when she was at school. When the party reached the school-house, Emma turned towards it, and the rest went on to the Vicarage; but as Emma reached the door of the school, ere she entered, she stood a moment watching the party wistfully, and Margaret, happening to turn round, saw her looking after them.

‘Poor Emma!’ she exclaimed. ‘I wish she was in our class!’

‘Oh! do you?’ returned three or four. ‘It never seems natural like to have a new maiden come in.’

‘No,’ said Sarah; ‘I should like to keep always as we are.’

‘Well! I wish that poor Emma could come in,’ said Margaret; ‘she’s getting a big girl, and I should like her to get the teaching we do. I often wish all our maidens got Miss Walton’s teaching, as we do.’

‘A pretty big class she’d have!’ said little Ruth, sighing.

‘Yes, it can’t be, I know,’ said Margaret, still

seriously, not seeming inclined to respond to Ruth's joke; 'but I do often wish it. I wish it for Emma more than any, because I know she'd like the teaching we get. She sometimes asks me what Miss Walton has taught us.'

'So she does me,' said Rose; 'and, do you know, I was wishing the same thing the other day, and I almost thought I'd tell Miss Walton how much poor Emma wants to come to her lessons.'

'I wish you would!' said Margaret, while some of the others exclaimed,

'Oh! don't; just think how she stumbles over her reading—how tiresome it would be!'

'I suppose our reading is tiresome to Miss Walton,' said Margaret, 'and yet she does not think of it.'

'Well, but that is not the same,' said Bessie; 'we can read without spelling every other word.'

'I didn't think about the reading,' said Margaret. 'I only thought Miss Walton's lessons a very good thing, and so I wished that all the other maidens might have them as well as me. What do you say, Agnes? Should we want to keep the other maidens out?'

'If we like the lessons ourselves, I don't know how we can,' was Agnes's low reply; and just then they reached the garden gate, and there was no more time for talk.

They found Miss Walton all ready for the lesson, and after hearing them say part of the Catechism, she asked,

'How did you learn that God's mercy reaches us?'
Several. Through Christ.

Miss W. And what did our blessed Lord do to obtain this mercy for us?

All. Died for us.

Miss W. What, then, must go along with our
"ith?

Ruth. 'A thankful remembrance of His death.'

Miss W. Yes, we must remember *how* mercy was obtained for us—the great price paid for our redemption. We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, St. Peter says, but—how?

Several. 'With the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.' (1 St. Peter, i. 18, 19.)

Miss W. And this we ought to—what, Alice?

'Remember,' she replied.

Miss W. Therefore what does the Church require of those who come to the Lord's Supper?

Rose. 'To examine themselves' whether they have 'a thankful remembrance of Christ's death.'

Miss W. And why is it particularly required thus to remember it in coming to the Lord's Supper? Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?

Harriet. 'For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ.'

Miss W. Yes; one of its chief objects is to help us to keep in mind Christ's death. If we went, then, forgetting it, we should make the Supper of no meaning to ourselves. What are Christ's own words about it?

Several. 'This do in remembrance of Me.' (St. Luke, xxii. 19.)

Miss W. We must not do it, then, forgetting His death, which it represents. What must we see in the outward sign?

Sarah. The thing signified.

Miss W. And what is the thing signified in the Lord's Supper?

Bessie. 'The Body and Blood of Christ.'

Miss W. Yes; His Body broken, His Blood shed—when?

Mary. In His death upon the cross.

Miss W. What, then, is it most needful that we should do before going to the Lord's Supper?

Several. To examine ourselves whether we do remember it.

Miss W. Yes, lest we make it an unmeaning service. But our examination is not so much whether or not we remember the bare fact, *that* we can hardly fail to do, but whether we remember it—how?

Several. Thankfully.

Miss W. Right. What did you say was the third subject upon which we are bidden to examine ourselves?

All. Thankfulness.

Miss W. We must remember Christ's death, then; but we are especially to examine whether we remember it—?

Ruth. Thankfully.

Miss W. What are we to remember thankfully?

Anna. Christ's death.

Miss W. And why must we be thankful for it?

Agnes. Because we find mercy through it.

Miss W. Very good, Agnes. Now if we are truly sorry for our former sins, and believe—what about them?

Margaret. That God will mercifully forgive them, through Christ.

Miss W. Yes; if we do this, how shall we feel about that death by which this mercy is made ours?

All. We shall be thankful.

Miss W. And if we steadfastly purpose to lead a new life, and, though weak ourselves, believe—what?

Several. That God will mercifully help us, through Christ.

Miss W. Yes, because He has died, and purchased for us the aid of the Holy Spirit. If we believe this, how shall we remember His death?

Several. Thankfully.

Miss W. Yes, truly. Repentance must be accompanied by faith; and true repentance, and lively faith, must lead to—what?

Agnes. A thankful remembrance of Christ's death.

Miss W. And our examination of ourselves on these points should stir up our thankfulness. Now how will thankfulness show forth itself?

(The girls had not a ready answer, and Miss Walton said,)

'If you were very hungry, and somebody gave you something to eat, what would you feel?'

'Thankful,' said one or two.

Miss W. And how would you show this to the friend who brought the food?

Several. By thanking him.

Miss W. Yes, or giving him thanks. Now what one word expresses giving God thanks?

'Thanksgiving,' said Rose.

Miss W. We show forth our thankfulness, then, by—?

Several. Thanksgiving.

Miss W. Or speaking words of thanks. What words of thanks do we say every day in Church?

Emily. We give 'Thee most humble and hearty thanks for all Thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men.'

Miss W. And for what above all things do we bless God?

Jane. 'The redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.'

Miss W. And how did Christ redeem the world?

Several. By His death.

Miss W. Thus we are taught to show forth our thankfulness with our lips in what sort of words?

Anna. Words of praise.

Miss W. How does David say he will praise the Name of the Lord?

Rose. 'I will praise the Name of God with a song: and magnify It with thanksgiving.' (Psalm lxi. 31.)

Miss W. And what sort of a sacrifice does he say he will offer?

Sarah. 'I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving: and will call upon the Name of the Lord.' (Psalm cxvi. 15.)

Miss W. And in another Psalm he cries out, 'O sing unto the Lord'—?

'With thanksgiving,' they continued; 'sing praises upon the harp unto our God.' (Psalm cxlvii. 7.)

Miss W. How, too, does St. Paul bid us make our requests known unto God?

Several. 'With thanksgiving.' (Phil. iv. 6. See also Col. iv. 2.)

Miss W. Yes; and he also shows how abounding in faith will lead to thanksgiving. Look at Col. ii. 6, 7.

Harriet. 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, *abounding therein with thanksgiving.*'

Miss W. Truly believing in all that Christ's death has wrought for us, we shall be stirred up to thankfulness, which will show forth itself—how?

Several. In thanksgiving.

Miss W. Once more, the song of heaven teaches us this. Those who stand around the throne fall down and worship God, saying—?

Agnes. 'Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.' (Rev. vii. 12.)

Miss W. If, then, we would find out whether our

remembrance of Christ's death be a thankful remembrance, we must examine—what ?

Several. Whether it is shown in thanksgiving.

Miss W. Yes, whether we give praise and glory to God in words of thanksgiving ; especially for what gift ?

Mary. Christ to die for us.

Miss W. Now we have a striking example in the Bible of thankfulness thus showing forth itself. Do you remember what I mean ? Turn to St. Luke xvii. and read from verse 11 to 19.

While they were finding their places, Agnes said, 'Please, Ma'am, you mean about the ten lepers.'

Miss W. Yes, I do ; read the account, however, and then I'll ask you about it. (The girls did so, and then Miss Walton said,) Which of these was really thankful ?

Several. The Samaritan.

Miss W. How did he show it ?

Emily. 'He turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks.' (Verses 15, 16.)

Miss W. He gave God thanks, then, in words of—?

'Praise,' said some.

'Glory,' said others.

Miss W. And what did Jesus say when He saw but one out of the ten ?

Ruth. 'Were there not ten cleansed ? but where are the nine ? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.'

Miss W. Had they not all received the same benefit ?

Margaret. Yes ; as they went they were cleansed.

Miss W. And probably they were all very glad to be cleansed, to be made well from so fearful a disease ; but this was not thankfulness—why ?

Mary. Because they forgot Who made them well.

Miss W. Just so; and how did they show this forgetfulness?

Several. By not returning to give thanks.

Miss W. While, on the other hand, the poor Samaritan thought immediately of the Giver of the blessing, and was full of—?

‘Thankfulness,’ said Jane.

Miss W. And he proved this by returning at once and glorifying God—how?

Several. With a loud voice.

Miss W. Yes; falling on his face in humility at Christ’s feet, and thus acknowledging his own unworthiness, and that it was mercy which had healed him. Now the mercy shown to this poor man, was a type of the mercy God shows to us, for which we are to be thankful. What is leprosy a type of?

Rose. Sin.

Miss W. And what was healed?

All. The leprosy.

Miss W. And how did the healing reach the poor man?

Anna. Through Christ.

Miss W. So what does God heal in us?

Several. Sin.

Miss W. And how does the healing reach us?

Margaret. Through Christ.

Miss W. Yes; we could do nothing ourselves to heal ourselves, but, like the lepers, we could but stand afar off, and cry—?

Emily. ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.’

Miss W. And in our misery Christ had mercy on us, and came and died for us, and healed us. What, therefore, is it our bounden duty to do?

Several. To give Him thanks.

Miss W. Yes, to feel thankful, and to show our thanks in words of praise. The Lord’s Supper is a special feast of thanksgiving, and, therefore, to receive it worthily, what must we examine?

Sarah. Whether we are thankful.

Miss W. Just so; for words without the inward feeling are vain words. In the exhortation at the Lord's Supper, what are we told above all things we must give to God?

Anna. 'Most humble and hearty thanks to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man.'

Miss W. And how are we bid to feed on Christ's Body?

Several. 'By faith with *thanksgiving*.'

Miss W. Yes; and to drink and—?

Margaret. 'Be thankful.'

Miss W. And in what words of praise are we taught to show forth our thanksgiving?

Emily. 'Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High.'

Miss W. And again afterwards, Sarah?

Sarah. 'Glory be to God on high; and in earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.'

Miss W. Truly, then, we should examine ourselves, and so stir up our thankfulness, that we may—though our best be but feebly—join in these glorious songs of praise.

But there is another way in which we show thankfulness. When Mr. Walton gave you that bunch of flowers the other day, Agnes, what did you do the moment you joined your companions?

'Please, Ma'am, I showed it to them,' she replied.

Miss W. And did not you do anything but show them?

Agnes. Yes, Ma'am, I told them all about it—how Mr. Walton was having some flowers dug up, and how he'd given me that beautiful bunch.

Miss W. Yes; you made known what you thought Mr. Walton's kindness; and didn't you wish any of your companions to have some too?

'Oh yes, Ma'am,' she replied. 'I told them Mr. Walton said he'd give some to any one who went for them as long as they lasted, but they didn't like to go.'

'Silly children,' said Miss Walton. 'Many of the flowers died for want of gathering and putting into water; but as you didn't come for them, we thought you didn't care about them.'

'Please, Ma'am, we didn't know whether we were to come,' said one or two.

Miss W. Well, never mind about them now; it can't be helped. But now cannot you tell me how we may show our thankfulness for Christ's death as well as by words of thanksgiving?

Mary. By telling others about it.

Miss W. Quite right; and by wishing them to share the benefits. What did the shepherds do, as soon as they had heard the angel's message, and found the wondrous Babe?

Rose. 'They made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child.' (St. Luke, ii. 17.)

Miss W. And when the apostles were threatened and commanded not to speak in the Name of Jesus, what did they answer?

Anna. 'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.' (Acts, iv. 19, 20.)

Miss W. What was it that forced them to speak,

which made them feel that they *could* not keep silence?

Margaret. Their thankfulness.

Miss W. Yes; they were themselves so thankful for the glad tidings of the Gospel, that they could not hold their peace; they could not but tell others the glad tidings. So, too, when they were beaten, and again commanded not to speak, what was the effect? Look at chap. v. 41, 42.

Harriet. 'They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.'

Miss W. And thus they showed forth—?

Several. Their thankfulness.

Miss W. And how did St. Andrew show his thankfulness for having found the Messiah? Whom did he tell?

Rose. His own brother Simon.

Miss W. And how did St. Philip show his thankfulness?

Several. By telling Nathanael. (See St. John, i. 40, 41, 43, 45.)

Miss W. After our Lord's miracles of healing, how did those who were healed show their thankfulness?

Several. By telling others.

Miss W. Yes. Look at St. Mark, vii. 36, 37.

Bessie. 'And He charged them that they should tell no man: but the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.'

Miss W. How, then, can we find out whether we have a thankful remembrance of Christ's death? By *examining whether we—?*

'Tell others of it,' said Emily.

Miss W. Yes, whether we are anxious to make known, as far as we are able, what Christ has done for us—how He loved us, and died for us, and offers Himself to be our Food and Sustenance—where?

Sarah. In the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Now to whom do you think children and girls like you can try and make it known? (As Miss Walton said this, Alice thought of what passed about Emma as they came along, and that Margaret had shown that she was thankful for instruction by wishing others to share it. She told her mother all about it when she got home, and said how good Margaret was. Miss Walton heard of it afterwards from Mrs. Churton, though she did not know at the time what was passing in Alice's mind, and went on to say,) I think the youngest of you can do something. Ruth, is not your little sister old enough to learn about God now?

Ruth. Yes, Ma'am, she knows the Creed now, and the Lord's Prayer.

Miss W. And Agnes, is it not the same with both your younger sisters?

Agnes. Yes, Ma'am; even little Fanny can say some hymns.

Miss W. Then to whom can such as you try and make known Christ's death?

Several. Our younger brothers and sisters.

Miss W. How often on Sunday evenings you might tell them a story from the Bible, and lead them to know and love their Saviour, or help them over their lessons, explain them, and make them pleasant instead of hard! Now if you are really thankful for what Christ has done for you, you will show it—how?

All. By teaching our younger brothers and sisters about Him.

Miss W. Yes; and you elder girls might find opportunities, by reading to the sick and old,

for instance. In reading the Bible to those who cannot read for themselves, Whom are you making known?

Anna. Christ.

Miss W. And thus you may show forth—?

Several. Our thankfulness.

Miss W. But are there not still countries where the people know nothing of Christ and His death?

Several. Yes, Ma'am, heathen countries.

Miss W. Well, if you are thankful yourself for Christ's death and the benefits of it, what will you wish and try to do for these poor heathen?

Mary. To tell them about it.

Miss W. That they may share—what?

Emily. The benefits of Christ's death.

Miss W. And how can you help to do this, though you cannot teach them with your own mouths?

Several. By giving money to send clergymen to teach them.

Miss W. Yes; and you will really try to do this, as you are able, if you are truly thankful yourself for Christ's death. But do you remember what you once told me you could do, even if you are quite unable to give money?

Several. Pray for them.

Miss W. Yes; and pray for those who have gone out to teach them. Pray that they may have grace to make known the glad tidings for which you are thankful. St. Paul thus begs for the prayers of Christians. Look at Eph. vi. 18, 19, 20.

Alice. 'Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel . . . that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.'

Miss W. In which petition of the Lord's Prayer do we do this?

Ruth. 'Thy kingdom come.'

Miss W. Then what should we ask ourselves, if we would find out whether we have a thankful remembrance of Christ's death?

Margaret. Whether we try to make it known.

Miss W. Yes; and whether we show forth our thankfulness in—?

All. Thanksgiving.

Miss W. And this is especially required in coming to the Lord's Supper; for what do we then show forth?

Several. Christ's death.

Miss W. It is, as it were, represented in the congregation; and by joining in this representation, we profess our own thankful remembrance of it, and our desires that it should be known and remembered by all; and, therefore, we should be very sure that we are thus thankful, that we may join heartily, and so worthily, in thus showing forth Christ's death.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Continued.*)

IT was not until the next evening that John and James reached home again, and were welcomed with Katharine's usual kind welcome and cheerful manner, while she looked first at one and then at the other, trying to read the issue of their journey in their looks; for Katharine had hoped that Mr. Bushman might perhaps take James back when the confession was made, and he saw that he had wronged her brother. Their faces, however, did not betoken such good news. While she stirred up the fire, she said,

'You'll get some tea, and then tell me all about your visit—it will be Martha's bed-time then.'

'Yes, we'll tell you all presently, Katie, but I'm dreadfully hungry now; we missed the coach, and have had to walk all the way,' said John.

'I thought you were getting late,' she replied. 'I looked for you an hour or two ago, and Martha and I went to meet you ever so far along the road.'

Tea at length was over, and Martha sent to bed, and then Katharine, taking out her work, said,

'Well, James dear, how did you get on? Did Mr. Bushman believe you?'

'I don't know,' he replied. 'He said there was no more *proof* against Andrew than against me. I told him all, Katie; how I had been led wrong, and what kept me silent. He listened kindly enough, and seemed very much surprised when I told him that it was Andrew who introduced me to the Tatlers.'

'Has Andrew gone, then?'

'Yes; but he has given his direction to Mr. Bushman,' said John.

'And did you try and prove your accusations against him, James?' asked Katharine.

'No, I didn't. I just told Mr. Bushman what I had seen, and I told him that I now saw how wrongly I had acted in not telling him before.'

'He did more than that, Katie,' said John, 'for he begged Mr. Bushman to overlook Andrew's misconduct. He said he did not wish to ruin him.'

'But didn't he seem to believe James?' asked Katharine, in a dissatisfied tone.

'Well, James thinks not, but I think he did at first, only he did not like to commit himself, and I think he'll try and bring the thefts home to Andrew. I don't think he'll let it rest.'

'And then Andrew and all the Tatlers will think I held my tongue while I could gain anything by it, and then, to spite them, told all,' said James.

'*They can't expect you quietly to lose your character, and take no steps to be righted,*' said Katharine.

'If you do right, you really must not mind what they think of you. You know their opinion is of no value.'

James writhed as she said this, for, as he had walked along the street, he had caught a sight of Harriet, and, in spite of himself, it had stirred up feelings which, for the last week, he had been striving to crush.

'I hope Mr. Bushman did not promise he'd do nothing,' said Katharine.

'No, he wouldn't promise, he said he'd think about it; and my notion is, that after James begged off Andrew, he began to fancy that James is afraid of inquiries, for he said *Andrew* was most anxious all should be cleared up, and it was very strange he should be so if he were guilty himself. Before that, I think he was inclined to believe James.'

'Andrew always managed to deceive Mr. Bushman,' said James. 'He could face out anything.'

'And did you see anything of the Tatlers, James?' asked Katharine.

'He heard something,' said John, 'which he never told me till we were coming along, or I would have taken care Mr. Bushman should know it. Andrew was married to the eldest girl very quietly the morning after he left Mr. Bushman, and then they went off together.'

'Mr. Bushman must know it,' said James, 'for it was his servant who told me.'

'He ought to know it,' said Katharine.

'I suppose he'll find it out in time, if he does not know already,' said James. 'It is only three days since Andrew left, and I fancy the Tatlers will have kept it quiet so far, but it must come out soon. Nancy told me that they were married without any fuss, and never came back to the house, but went straight off to the railway. I suspect Andrew was anxious to get away before any inquiries could be made.'

'But you say he's left his direction,' said Katharine.

'Mr. Bushman thinks so; but I don't believe he's left the true one,' said James. 'I don't believe Mr. Bushman will ever hear anything of him again, unless he takes great trouble to trace him out, and I believe this is what Andrew has trusted to all the time. He intended to get away, and so escape Mr. Bushman.'

'Well if that's the case, I think it will prove his guilt, at all events,' said Katharine; 'and, indeed, I hope your innocence may be proved, James, for I know not how you'll get another place without a character.'

'Nor I,' said James, despondingly. 'I hoped Mr. Bushman would believe me, but I'm sure he doesn't, and I don't know how my innocence can be proved, except by the Tatlers. They could if they liked, but that I'm sure they never will.'

'Well,' said John, 'don't you despair, James. You didn't mind difficulties when you were a boy. Depend upon it, all will come right in the end, and, in the meantime, do what you can at the quarry. You can help me in accounts, if in nothing else, and we shall have time to look about us.'

James, indeed, did not seem like himself, for he was naturally high-spirited, and not given to look at the dark side of anything. But then the troubles of his boyhood had been comparatively troubles without sin, and now these were his own faults, which were the darkest part of all, and this he felt he must look at; and the more he looked, the darker it seemed. And not only this, but James had loved Harriet more than he himself knew, and he found it hard to crush that love.

Next morning, however, he came down much more light-hearted, and having given into Katharine's hand the small sum Mr. Bushman had owed him, he insisted upon going to the quarries and working there.

Charles, or any of them ; and though he found he had not strength to do all they did, he persevered in doing what he could. He came home the first evening hungry, and tired enough to enjoy a good night's rest, but he did not now forget his devotions, or hurry over them.

John, in the meantime, had made up his mind that if in a very short time he did not hear something from Mr. Bushman, he would go over again, and do his best to prove James's innocence, of which he felt no more doubt than of his own. He was talking to his wife one evening when James was not present, and said,

'Well, Katie, whatever happens, I don't believe we shall ever have to regret all this for James. I believe it will all prove a great blessing to him.'

'Yes,' said Katharine, with tears of pleasure rising to her eyes, 'I believe his trouble is blessed to him. I think it is wonderful to see how patient and humble he is, and, just as when he was a boy, he tries so to make up for his faults.'

'Yes, and I'd rather see him do that than talk more about them.'

'So would I,' said Katharine. 'He confessed freely enough where he was wrong at first when we required to know all ; but now, though I see from his face he is often thinking of it, he doesn't talk about it.'

'No, but he was talking to me to-day about the Lord's Supper again ; he says he shall not feel happy till he's been there, and yet, after so great a fall, he doesn't know whether he's right to think about it.'

And now we must hurry to a conclusion of James's history, as our story is becoming too long. Some time passed without hearing anything from Mr. Bushman, and James patiently bore the suspense, and kept John back from doing anything in a hurry, except that they both consulted Mr. Benson, hoping thro

him to get another situation for James; for being unused to quarry work, in a short time it was found too hard for him, and he was obliged to do very little, and for one or two days was so poorly, that he was obliged to stay at home altogether. When he was alone with his sister, he had some pleasant talk with her, though usually he said but little about the past, and Katharine found that he was suffering more than she thought about Harriet.

'I know I must conquer my love,' he said, 'for she is not fit for my wife, and my reason tells me she did not love me; but at times I'm troubled with the thought that I've perhaps used her badly, and that she may be suffering.'

Katharine found, however, that he had in no way pledged himself to her, and from all he said, was quite convinced that she did not care for him—that laugh alone was enough to prove this to her, and she persuaded James to be more easy about it.

Every evening found James a worshipper in the church, and great comfort he found from the service. Several long conversations, also, Mr. Benson had with him, (after he had heard his history,) and James, who had known him from boyhood, was open with him, and felt him to be a friend indeed.

Altogether, neither John nor Katharine could regret the trouble which had come upon James, for it was doing him good. Far better, they both thought it, that he should have been turned away, even unjustly, than have gone on in the thoughtless, careless way of life he had been leading. One evening, when James seemed rather low, John said something like this to him, by way of cheering him up, and James's answer more than satisfied them.

'John,' he said, 'I'm sorry to be a burden to you, and, please God, I wish not to be so a day longer than I can help; but I thank God every day that He checked me in my downward way. I would not go

back to what I was the day before my master dismissed me for anything.'

And James was not much longer to be a burden to his kind brother and sister. A visit from Mr. Bushman about a month after James's dismissal set all right again.

After John and James had been over, he had written to Andrew to ask some questions in order to clear up the business, and waited day after day, but no answer came. Then he wrote to the firm with whom Andrew said he was going to be, but still got no answer. He then began to make closer inquiries at home, and now heard of Andrew's hasty and quiet marriage with Susan; he even called at the Tatlers' to try and find out where Andrew was, but they refused to tell him. He then inquired from his old customer if he could at all describe which young man had generally been found in the shop. He could not tell himself, but said he thought perhaps his wife and daughters could; and in a few days brought a description, which left Mr. Bushman in no doubt that it was *James*, and that he had misjudged him; and much he began to regret his hasty dismissal. Every day, (now that he had set himself fairly to find out the truth), brought fresh proof of James's innocence, and of Andrew's double-dealing, though, of course, there was no proof of his dishonesty—nothing but James's word went against him on this head; but the more Mr. Bushman found that James had been blameless in other matters, the more he felt sure he was blameless in this, and that his account must be true. Again and again James's humble, straightforward, and manly confession came to his mind. It agreed quite with many particulars which his inquiries had brought to light.

At length his letters to Andrew and his supposed master were returned, saying that no such people were to be found in Birmingham. The envelopes

were covered with writing, refusing the letters. 'Not for No. 4;' 'Not Hanover Street,' &c., &c. No longer feeling any doubt that Andrew had deceived him, that *he* was the guilty one, and had managed to escape, Mr. Bushman wrote to John, saying he would be over to see them next day, and hoped to set things right.

A few questions he asked James, all of which he answered quite satisfactorily, and then Mr. Bushman said,

'James, I've wronged you, and I am very sorry for it. I will take you back to my service if you will forgive me, and come; or I'll give you a good character, if you would rather seek another situation.'

'Oh,' said James, taken quite by surprise, 'you are very good. Indeed, Sir, it is for you to forgive *me*, not I you. If you'll trust me again, (I was afraid you never would), I'll strive, with God's help, to serve you faithfully for the time to come.'

Mr. Bushman held out his hand, saying, 'Indeed I'll trust you, for you have done all you can to make up for your faults. You are conscious of them, and sorry for them, and I will not fear your falling into the same again.'

A happy hearing this was to both John and Katharine, and Mr. Bushman soon took his leave to visit his god-child, as he still called her, fixing that James should return to him in a few days.

'This is more than I deserve,' said James, as his master left the cottage. 'I hope I shall not get wrong again.'

'To know your danger, and provide against it all you can, is your safeguard,' said John; while Katharine kissed her brother, saying, 'I do not feel afraid as I did last time, James dear.'

'And I feel more afraid,' he replied.

Soon after this, James was walking towards the Vicarage to speak to Mr. Benson. The Holy Com-

munion was to be administered the following Sunday, and much James wished to go when he heard the notice given; but the thought of his late fall had kept him back; he felt as if he had not proved his repentance yet, and, therefore, was afraid to offer himself; but now that he was going away, he thought he would venture to ask Mr. Benson. He did so much wish to receive the seal of forgiveness, and to show forth his thankfulness for God's late mercies to him, in the Lord's Supper with his brothers and sisters—to go back to his work and to his trials (and James felt that the constant sight of Harriet would be a great trial to him) strengthened and refreshed, if only he was in a state to go to it worthily.

Just before he went to bed that night, John left the cottage to lock up the coal place, James said to his sister, 'Katie, shall you be at the Holy Communion on Sunday?'

'I hope so,' she replied. 'Why?'

'And John too?' he asked again.

'Yes,' returned Katharine.

'Well, Katie, Mr. Benson says *I* may go too. I did wish it very much, but I thought it could not be. Oh, Katie, I hope I shall never disgrace my profession again.'

'I trust not, dear James; I think you will not as you have done; but don't expect *all* to be easy to you afterwards. You will still have difficulties, but I trust you'll be strengthened to meet them.'

'I hope so. Good night, Katie; good night, John,' he continued, as John entered the kitchen, and then he turned up stairs.

The following Sunday saw John and Katharine, Charles and Helen, Miriam and the penitent James, meet together at God's Holy Altar, to receive their Saviour's Body and Blood, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

The next day James bade them all good-bye, and by evening was once more established with his old master, who had given up all attempts to trace out Andrew. James soon proved the reality of his repentance. Most diligent he was in his business, steady in his actions, a constant worshipper at God's house, both on week days, as he was able, and on Sundays; and a constant communicant. And his spare hours on Sunday were no longer spent in idle company. Both morning and afternoon he taught in the Sunday-school, glad, by instructing others, to show his own thankfulness for the instruction he had had; glad to be able to make known to others God's love and mercy, which he felt had been so largely shown to him.

The sight of Harriet had at first distressed him, but not altogether from the cause he expected. Her very look and carriage each time they met, made him feel how he had allowed himself to be deceived before; and he could but feel thankful that he had been saved from her, while he was distressed when he thought of the path she was taking—of the end of the life she was leading.

When the Tatlers found that James had returned to his situation, they endeavoured to make friends with him again, but this he would not do. He tried to be civil to them, and in one or two conversations he had with Harriet, he did try very earnestly to lead her to see the end of her ways, and to induce her to change her manner of life; but his words seemed quite useless, and when they found James was not to be tempted as he had been before, they soon left off courting him; and at last Harriet would pass him in the street without notice, or even point him out as he walked with the school children to church, as an object of ridicule. All this James bore patiently, striving day by day to do his duty in that state of life unto which it had pleased God to call him.

‘Well, girls,’ said Miss Walton, ‘I must stop now. I have read you a long piece, so as to be able to finish next Sunday.’

‘Oh! shall you finish next Sunday?’ exclaimed one or two.

‘Yes, if all be well,’ said Miss Walton. ‘Now, you must be quick and go.’

LESSON LXXXIII.

THE SACRAMENTS.

SELF-EXAMINATION ON CHARITY.

WHAT two things do we learn by the Ten Commandments, girls? asked Miss Walton.

Several. Our duty towards God, and our duty towards our neighbour.

Miss W. Now, upon which of these duties have we herto been taught to examine ourselves?

Rose. Our duty towards God.

Miss W. But, lastly, what are we bid to examine?

Margaret. Whether we be in charity with all men.

Miss W. That is, we are to examine ourselves on duty towards—?

All. Our neighbour.

Miss W. Which is all comprehended in one word what is it?

Charity,' said Agnes.

Miss W. What is meant by 'comprehended?' If I say 'the first-class must stand up,' who would be comprehended in that order?

Several. All of us.

Miss W. That is to say, you all form the first-class; and, therefore, under the one word 'class,' I could include or comprehend you all in my order. comprehend, then, means to—?

Include,' said Rose.

Miss W. So, every duty to our neighbour is included in this saying, namely—?

Several. 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' * (Rom. xiii. 9.)

Miss W. Then what do you mean by 'charity'?

Several. Love.

Miss W. And what are we to examine about this love or charity?

All. Whether we be in charity with all men.

Miss W. Now the necessity of this charity our Lord Himself has taught us in His Sermon on the Mount. What direction does He give about bringing our gift to the Altar?

Ruth. 'If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' (St. Matt. v. 23, 24.)

Miss W. Then we must not offer our gift until we are—what?

Several. 'In charity with all men.'

Miss W. That is, until we have done our best to make up for any injury we may have done another, and have no ill-feelings towards any. Now, do we offer any gift at the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. Yes; money, if we can.

Miss W. For whom is the money collected at the Lord's Supper?

Several. For the poor.

Miss W. And, in giving to the poor, to Whom are we offering our alms?

Agnes. To God.

Miss W. Very well; then, in the Lord's Supper, we bring our gift to the Altar; but, before we presume to offer it, what must we take heed to do?

Jane. To be reconciled to our brother.

Miss W. Yes; if we would have our gift accepted, we must be in—?

* See Lesson xlix.

‘Charity with all men,’ they continued.

Miss W. But, besides this gift of alms, there are three offerings made to God in the Lord’s Supper. What does the clergyman offer upon the Holy Table?

Emily. Bread and wine.

Miss W. Whose gift are the fruits of the earth, and, among them, bread and wine?

Several. God’s.

Miss W. Yes; and to Whom are they here offered?

Jane. To God.

Miss W. We give to God His own again. In the ancient Church, the oblation was always made with some such words as these, ‘Lord, we offer to Thee Thy own, out of what Thou hast bountifully given us.’ This offering, then, of bread and wine, is an acknowledgment of—?

Agnes. God’s bounty.

Miss W. Yes, and of His sovereignty over all His creatures. We give to Him His own, that He may give us a more abundant return. For, what do we receive again from Him?

Margaret. The Body and Blood of Christ.

Miss W. But again: what do the clergyman and people together offer to God with their lips? The priest says to the people, ‘Let us give thanks unto our Lord God,’ and what do they answer?

Anna. ‘It is meet and right so to do.’

Miss W. Then, the priest confirming these words, he and the people immediately join in offering—what, to God?

Emily. Thanks and praise.

Miss W. But, thirdly, there is an offering each person is taught to make to God after the Lord’s Prayer. What is it?

Sarah. ‘Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to

be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee.'

Miss W. Each person, then, offers up—?

Several. Himself.

Miss W. And when do we make these offerings?

All. In the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes; but what does our Lord teach us we must do before we offer our gifts?

Mary. Be reconciled to our brother.

Miss W. And who is meant by our 'brother'?

Alice. All mankind.

Miss W. Yes; and God will not accept an offering from us, or in our behalf, while we are at enmity with any man. How are we taught we must feel towards our very enemies?

Agnes. 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.' (St. Matt. v. 44.)

Miss W. We may have enemies, that is, those who hate us, and despitefully use us, but will this make us unfit to offer our gifts?

Margaret. Not if we don't hate them in return.

Miss W. Quite right; that is what we must examine, not whether other people dislike us, and have been unkind to us, but—what?

Several. Whether *we* dislike any one.

'Or are unkind to any one,' said Ruth.

Miss W. Just so; or whether we have grieved or injured any one; and if we have, then what must we do?

Bessie. Be reconciled.

Miss W. Our Blessed Lord Himself had many enemies—had He not?

Rose. Yes; the Chief Priests and Pharisees.

Miss W. But had He any angry or unkind feelings towards them?

Mary. No, for He prayed for their forgiveness.

Miss W. When?

Several. As He hung upon the Cross: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' (St. Luke, xxiii. 34.)

Miss W. He did what He bids *us* do—love our enemies, pray for them—and what else?

Several. Do them good.

Miss W. Then, when we are bidden to examine ourselves whether we be in charity with all men, it does not mean that we must be without enemies, that nobody must think evil of us, or hate us; but that we must examine how *we* feel towards them, and towards all men. And what are we to feel?

'Love,' said some.

'Charity,' said others.

Miss W. Yes; and if we think what the benefits are which we hope to obtain in the Lord's Supper, we shall see how we lose them all for want of charity; and, therefore, how needful this examination is. How, alone, do we obtain remission of our sins?

Several. By the Death of Christ.

Miss W. And what do we believe is sealed to us in eating His Body, and drinking His Blood, in remembrance of His Cross and Passion?

Margaret. The forgiveness of our sins.

Miss W. Yes; but what did our Lord say to those who forgive *not men* their trespasses?

All. 'If ye forgive not men their trespasses, *neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*' (St. Matt. vi. 15.)

Miss W. Then, before we can look for forgiveness, or the sealing of our pardon, what must we do?

Several. Forgive others.

Miss W. Therefore, we are bid to examine—?

Harriet. Whether we be in charity with all men.

Miss W. Again: with Whom do we become one, if, with a lively faith, we receive the Lord's Supper?

Sarah. 'We are one with Christ, and Christ with us; we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us.'

Miss W. Yes; but what does St. John tell us that 'God is'?

Mary. 'Love.'

Miss W. And what does he say of him that loveth not?

Rose. 'He that loveth not, knoweth not God.' (1 St. John, iv. 8.)

Miss W. Then, to be *one with Christ*, we must—? 'Love,' said little Agnes.

Miss W. And St. John speaks not only of love to God, but love to man. Turn to 1 St. John, iv. 7.

Bessie. '*Beloved, let us love one another* : for love is of God.'

Miss W. And, then, he goes on to say that he that loveth not, knoweth not God. Look also at verses 20, 21.

Jane. 'If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. . . . And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.'

Miss W. And now look at chap. iii. 24.

Alice. 'He that keepeth His commandments, dwelleth in Him.'

Miss W. Then, if we would dwell in Christ, what must we do?

Emily. Love our brother.

Miss W. Yes, as He gave us commandment; and, without this, though we may receive the outward symbols of His Body and Blood, we cannot be made one with Him Who is LOVE. Look again at chap. iv. 12 and 16.

Anna. '*If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*'

Miss W. Therefore we must examine ourselves

whether we be in love or charity one with another ; that we may dwell in Christ, and Christ in us. And once more : the life of our souls is strengthened and refreshed—where ?

All. In the Lord's Supper.

Miss W. Yes ; by partaking of Christ, Who is our life ; but what does St. John say of him who loveth not his brother ? Chapter iii. 14.

Ruth. ' We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. *He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*'

Miss W. Lest, then, we should lose life, and abide in death, we must examine ourselves whether—?

' We be in charity with all men,' they continued.

Miss W. Let us see, then, how this charity will show itself, that we may be the better able to judge ourselves. In what two ways did you say God shows His mercy and love to us ?

Several. By giving and forgiving.

Miss W. Yes ; and why did our Lord bid us love our enemies, &c. ?

Anna. ' That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven.'

Miss W. And how does he finish this exhortation, and show how children should be like their Father ?

Agnes. ' Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.' (St. Matthew, v. 45 and 48.)

Miss W. Then how must we show love and mercy, that we may be perfect, as He is perfect ?

Rose. By giving and forgiving.

Miss W. Yes ; love will make us give, and love will make us show mercy—how ?

Several. In forgiving.

Miss W. Now that we show our love in giving St. John teaches us. Look at 1 St. John, iii. 17.

Bessie. ' Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of

compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?’

Miss W. He asks this question, meaning that it cannot dwell in him, for love to God is shown—how, do you remember?

Several. By love to our neighbour.

Miss W. And love to our neighbour will lead us, if we have this world’s good, and see them need; to do what?

Harriet. To help them.

‘To give them something,’ said Sarah.

Miss W. Now look at Heb. vi. 10.

Emily. ‘God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.’

Miss W. What sort of a work was their ministering to the saints?

Several. A work and labour of love.

Miss W. The same way St. Paul speaks in 1 Thess. i. 3.

Ruth. ‘Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love.’

Miss W. Now look at Deut. xv. 7, 8, 11, how God spoke to His ancient people of the duty of giving to the poor.

Margaret. ‘If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren . . . thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth . . . For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore, I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.’

Miss W. If, then, we truly love, or are in charity with all men, how shall we show it?

Rose. By giving to the poor and needy.

Miss W. Yes; according as we are able. I do not mean that giving to the poor *is* love; for what does St. Paul say? 'Though I bestow all my goods'—

'To feed the poor,' continued Anna, 'and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.' (1 Cor. xiii. 3.)

Miss W. We may, then, give, without having charity, but we cannot have charity without giving; our love will show itself in our actions. But can all give money?

'Not the poor,' said one or two.

Miss W. Certainly there are some who cannot give money, yet must they show their love by giving. When people are in need, is it always money that will help them best? If a little child has fallen down and hurt itself, is it money that it wants?

'No; pity,' said Emily, 'and help.'

Miss W. And if you were passing by, what would you give?

Several. Pity.

Miss W. Yes; you could speak a kind pitying word, and raise it up again, and perhaps lead it home, or comfort it. Then, though you could not give money, you would be giving what you were able, and so show—what?

Several. Love.

Miss W. St. Paul says 'charity suffereth long, and—'?

'Is kind,' they all continued.

Miss W. Then what sort of actions will charity give?

Ruth. Kind actions.

Miss W. Now, then, you see how, in many other ways of giving, more than in merely giving money, charity shows itself. Kind actions, kind words, kind thoughts, may be given, when money cannot. If you know of a person very lonely, sitting hour after hour with none to speak to, what would charity lead you to do?

Margaret. To go and sit with her.

Miss W. Yes; you could give your company to her. Or, if another cannot read, and would like to hear a chapter of the Bible, what could you do?

Several. Go and read to her.

Miss W. Thus give your voice and time to your neighbour. If your mothers are hard at work and want help, and play-time comes, what might you do?

All. Stay and help her.

Miss W. Yes; give your play-hour and strength to her. So in a hundred other ways we may show our love by *giving*, though we have no money to spare. When the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple asked an alms of St. Peter and St. John as they entered, what did St. Peter answer?

Several. 'Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.' (Acts, iii. 6.)

Miss W. He gave help, though silver and gold he could not give, and thus showed—what?

All. His love.

Miss W. If, then, you would find out whether you are in charity with all men, you must examine, not only whether you give what money you can, but—what?

Margaret. Whether we give kindnesses.

Miss W. Yes; whether you consider others more than yourselves—whether you do to all men—how?

Several. As I would they should do to me.

Miss W. If you do this, it will lead you perpetually to show your love by giving kind actions, or kind words, or your time, or help, or sympathy, to your neighbour. And who are those who have most claim upon your love shown in this way?

Rose. Our parents, and brothers, and sisters.

Miss W. Very right. Examine yourselves, then, first of all, in your actions to them; for it is towards

hem, or your school-fellows, or fellow-servants, you are most likely to fail. I have sometimes seen a girl who was pleasant and cheerful with strangers, ready to do a kind action, or speak a kind word for them, sulky at home, making those she lived with unhappy by her silence and discontent. Could such a one be said to be in charity with all men?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No; for charity will make us *most* gentle, considerate, and kind towards those nearest to us, those with whom we live, or are in daily intercourse. What does St. Paul say charity 'seeketh not'?

Several. 'Her own.'

Miss W. So charity will teach us not to seek our own pleasure first in our family, not to indulge our own wishes, or our own sorrows, or fretfulnesses, and discontents, so as to make unhappy those with whom we live; but to learn to give *them* our best, most cheerful words, our brightest looks, our kindest actions, as we would they should do to us. When we were little children, who was it that ever met us with a smile, and bright look, and cheerful words?

Several. Our mother.

Miss W. How, then, should we return this her love, now?

Ruth. By doing the same.

Miss W. We must examine, then, lest we lose the benefit of the Lord's Supper, whether we do thus show our charity to all men, first to those nearest to us, and then to others; indeed; all with whom we have anything to do. But in what other way did you say charity would show itself?

All. In forgiving.

Miss W. Whom have we to forgive?

Several. Those who injure us.

Miss W. How do people injure us?

'By saying what is not true of us,' was the quick answer from several.

Miss W. That is one way, by word ; then sometimes by deed ; but whatever any may have done against us, what is required of us before we go to the Lord's Supper ?

Margaret. To forgive them.

Miss W. As I said before of enemies, we cannot prevent people's doing us unkindnesses, we cannot prevent their speaking bitter, or even false words of us ; but we may, and *must*, forgive them, or we cannot worthily partake of the Lord's Supper. And Who has set us an example of doing this ?

Several. Jesus Christ.

Miss W. And how has He taught us to pray for forgiveness ourselves ?

Mary. 'As we forgive them that trespass against us.'

Miss W. We may be quite sure, then, that if we feel there is *any one* we cannot forgive, then we are not in charity with all men—we could expect no blessing at the Lord's Supper, for we are not even fit to say the Lord's Prayer. I have so often spoken to you, girls, on the duty of forgiveness, that I will not say more about it now : I would rather look to the other side of the picture. May not *you* have injured others ?

'Yes, I suppose so,' said one or two.

Miss W. Then turn to the invitation to the Lord's Supper, and see what you are there taught you must do, if your examination brings to your memory injuries of word or deed done to others.

Emily. 'If ye shall perceive your offences to be such as are not only against God, but also against your neighbours ; then ye shall reconcile yourselves unto them ; being ready to make restitution and satisfaction, according to the uttermost of your powers, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other ; and being likewise ready to forgive others that have offended you, as ye would have forgiveness of your offences at God's hand.'

Miss W. To be in charity towards all men, what, then, must you do towards those you may have offended?

Margaret. Ask them to forgive us.

'As James did,' said Ruth, in a low voice.

Miss W. Yes; and if it is an injury for which you can make up, you must do it. What did Zacchæus say after Jesus had called him down?

Rose. 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold.' (St. Luke, xix. 8.)

Miss W. Yes; to the utmost of his power he was willing to make restitution, and so must we be; and if we cannot make restitution, we must still ask for pardon—obtain forgiveness from one we have injured, if we can. But suppose one we have injured refuses forgiveness, are *we* then to blame?

Several. No, Ma'am.

Miss W. No; then we must bear the anger patiently—it need not keep us away from the Lord's Supper. To find out, then, whether we are in charity with all men, what must we examine?

Anna. Whether we try to be kind to everybody, and give them what help we can.

Miss W. Yes, whether, if we cannot give money, we give what we can. And what next?

Several. Whether we forgive all that have injured us.

Miss W. And, lastly?

Sarah. Whether we have injured others.

Miss W. Yes, so as to need their forgiveness before we can be in charity with all men. And, if we do thus need it, what must we do?

Several. Ask forgiveness.

Miss W. But now, girls, supposing, on our examination, we find out that we have failed, as we surely shall in some point or other, must we quiet

make up our minds to stay away from the Lord's Supper?

Margaret. No; we must repent, and go.

Miss W. If thou rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, our Saviour does not say, *don't offer thy gift at all, does He?*

Several. No: 'First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.'

Miss W. It is not the object of self-examination to keep us away from the Holy Feast, but to help us to come more worthily; to make us more humble, and more determined to do better; to quicken our faith in God's mercy; to stir up our thankfulness, and warm our charity—to lead us to be reconciled to our brother, and then come and offer our gift, and receive all the benefits of this holy Sacrament. But if, after our examination, we cannot quiet our own conscience, what are we bid to do? Turn again to the invitation, and read the last paragraph.

Ruth. 'And because it is requisite, that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.'

Miss W. What, then, must we do?

Several. Go to our clergyman.

Miss W. Yes, or to some clergyman whom we know and value, and tell him our trouble. Remember, when we *can* do this, and will not, but go on, month after month, and year after year, staying away from the Lord's Supper because of our scruples,

we are sinning against God every time we turn away. *Our scruples will be no excuse, if we take no pains to have them removed*—if we will not use the remedy God has put into our reach. If, then, we cannot feel satisfied about ourselves, our remedy is not to stay away, for then we lose a blessing ourselves, and sin against God, but to go and ask our clergyman's advice. What is it, do you think, which keeps people back so much from doing this?

'Shame,' said Sarah, remembering her own shame.

Miss W. Yes, I think it is; but, at the last day, when we have to give an account of our neglect of the Lord's Supper, shall we dare to plead, 'I was ashamed of going to my clergyman to ask his advice, and I was afraid to go without it?' We must not give way to false shame, girls; and, I think, if people knew how ready most clergymen are to help, how they long to know the griefs and sorrows of their flock, that they may do their best to comfort them, they would not be so fearful, and ashamed to open their griefs. I have heard so many clergymen grieve that their people will not seek them, and speak openly to them; and no wonder; for, unless their people will do this in their need, the clergyman can do but little for them.

Miss Walton closed her books, and, as she did so, Emily remarked, half to herself,

'Well! we have really gone right through the Catechism!'

'Yes,' remarked Miss Walton, 'it has taken us more than a year and a half, and yet God has spared us to finish our task, and I see around me all the girls with whom I began the lessons but one. One has gone to render an account of her talents, and none of you know how soon your turn may come. The important question, then, which you should each ask yourselves, is this, "Have I tried to act upon what I have learned? Am I any better for all these

lessons?" What does our Saviour say of him to whom much is given?"

Several. Much shall be required.

Miss W. And of the servant who knows his Lord's will, and does it not?

Mary. He shall be beaten with many stripes. (See St. Luke, xii. 46-48.)

Miss W. None of you can plead that you do not know your Lord's will. 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.'

'And now must I finish the story to you?' she continued, after a moment's pause.

'Oh! yes, please, Ma'am,' they all replied.

THE ELDER SISTER, (*Concluded.*)

It is long since we have heard anything of Richard, but in tracing the history of one member of so large a family, we cannot help losing sight of others for a while.

Though *we* have heard nothing of Richard, his family had. He did not forget his promise, but wrote several times from different ports, and seemed to be in very good spirits. There was nothing, however, in his letters to lead Katharine to think that his character was really changing; they were affectionate and interesting, but if he mentioned what he called 'good fortune,' he never mentioned the Sender of it—if he had escaped a danger, he expressed no thanks to Him Who watches over us. About the time of James's trouble and repentance, a letter came from Richard with the first inclosure of money, and after that several more remittances came. Both John and Katharine wrote and begged he would send no more, for they did not need it; but Richard was determined to pay all he felt due, both to them and to Charles;

and, as Charles had said, he tried to pay it back with interest, for after they all felt that they were fully paid, he still sent more.

It was about three years after the death of Fenning, when Richard once more paid them all a visit, and very heartily he was welcomed by them.

'You have just come in time, Dick,' said Charles, as he shook him heartily by the hand, 'to see my happiness. I am going to be married next week, thanks partly to your remittances.'

'I'm glad to hear it, Charles. Yes, I've got on very well this time, if only my luck does not turn again. I shall do very well now.'

'Don't call it your luck,' said Charles, pained. 'If God continues to bless you, you'll do very well.'

'Ah! that's not the way we sailors talk,' returned Richard, laughing. 'It's very well for you, but it won't do among us. We are a wild set.'

Charles did not carry on the conversation then, but Richard's tone and words cast a damp over both his and Katharine's pleasure in seeing their brother. Many questions Richard had to ask, and much to hear and see. Willie was almost grown out of his knowledge, but Kezia was still small and weakly-looking. Miriam, too, was sprung up from a girl to a young woman, and Richard thought her very like Katharine.

'And how is James?' asked Richard.

'Oh, very well,' they all replied. 'He is coming over for the wedding, and then we shall be all together.'

'From all I hear,' said Charles, 'I expect he won't be longer than he can help in following my example.'

'Why, who is he going to marry?' asked Richard.

'Mr. Bushman's daughter, I expect,' said Charles.

'Hollo! he's looking high!' cried Richard.

'Now don't you go and say anything to him about it, Dick, or I shall get into trouble,' added Charles.
"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip"

'He's not asked her yet; and then he doesn't know what Mr. Bushman will say.'

'I see,' said Richard.

Tamar was an orphan, and so she had no house to go to from which to be married; so, with John and Katharine's ever-ready kindness, they insisted upon her staying a few days with them, and being married from their house; and very much this arrangement pleased all parties.

The evening before the wedding arrived, the whole family were assembled in John and Katharine's house. The little kitchen was indeed full enough, and Katharine (now a mother of a little boy four months old) had been very busy preparing for the coming event; but now, having just laid her little boy in his cot up-stairs, she came among the party, looking so happy and so kindly around them.

Charles and Tamar sat side by side. Richard and James were in full talk, while Miriam, who had been spared for an hour or so, and Kezia, listened, and joined in every now and then. Helen was talking to John, and Willie and Martha had crept into a corner together.

As Katharine, however, again took her seat by Helen, Charles exclaimed, 'Well, Katie, I'm sure there is not one of us here who has not to thank you more or less for our being as happy as we are. You've been a good and kind sister to every one of us, Katie.'

A low earnest 'That she has' from almost all in the room followed this speech of Charles's.

'Yes,' continued Tamar, warmly, 'I'm sure she's been like a sister to me ever since I knew her.'

'And something better than a sister to me,' said John, looking with affection at his wife.

Katharine at first felt too much to be able to answer, for as Charles had said this, every voice was hushed, until the earnest 'That she has' sounded. At last she recovered herself enough to say,

‘Indeed, if I’ve helped any of you to be happy, I’m more than repaid.’

‘I’ll tell you what, Katie,’ said Charles, seriously and earnestly, ‘and I don’t mind saying it before us all, that if dear mother could come among us now, she’d say you’d well fulfilled her last charge.’

‘Perhaps she is among us,’ was all the answer Katharine could make, and she was glad to hide her feelings by caressing Martha, who had crept up to her side, while Willie stood behind her chair, half leaning on it.

That evening was closed in with prayer. From the mother’s Bible John read the thirteenth chapter of the first of Corinthians, and then the family knelt together, while John, in the words of our Prayer-Book Collects, begged a blessing upon them all.

Charles was the last to say good-night, of the party who had to go to the town for a lodging, and as they all stood waiting for him, while he grasped John’s hand, he said once more,

‘You and Katharine have taught us what true charity is. A thousand thanks for all your kindness. May God reward you.’

The next morning, by a little after eight o’clock, the bridal party were walking up the church-yard. John led Tamar, as he would give her away, followed by Charles and Helen, James and Miriam, Kezia and Willie, Richard and Katharine; and little Martha (for *all* wished to be present,) completed the party, baby alone being absent. They were a happy, bridal-looking party, though there was no foolish finery. Neither bride nor bridesmaids (Helen and Miriam,) wore any thing which they could not put on again, but contented themselves with pretty, useful dresses, white shawls, and straw bonnets with white ribbon upon them.

The service which crowned the happiness of Charles and Tamar, and made them ‘no more twain, but one flesh,’ was ended just in time for

the party to join in the usual service of the day, and then was to follow the Holy Communion for the bridal party, and others who liked to join. Alas! that one turned away from that sacred feast! Richard went out with the children, and stayed in the churchyard until it was over. It did not take long, for there were not many present. The bridal party came out with the peace of God resting upon them; and now, Charles leading his wife, Richard his sister Helen, James his sister Miriam, followed by John and Katharine and the children, hastened home to breakfast, which a neighbour had undertaken to look after.

Several friends joined the breakfast, and I don't think a happier party ever sat down. That there was no hidden sorrow I cannot say, but it seemed as if, just then, it was forgotten or laid aside; and surely we may believe that there was One among those at that marriage feast Whom they saw not, but Whose Presence was felt and welcome to most of the party — One, without Whose blessing and presence there is no real happiness, no real prosperity.

A week after this, the family had returned to their accustomed labours. Charles had taken a small house next door to Helen, so that Tamar and she spent most of their time together, and worked in partnership. Charles took Willie to live with him; Helen still supported Kezia, but not for much longer; and in the following winter the poor little girl sickened, and before the spring came, had gone to her rest. Yet, they none of them doubted, for she had always been a good child, and was patient and loving during her somewhat long illness; happy in repeating her hymns and verses, or in listening to the Bible being read to her, which she always chose in preference to any other book.

After her death, Helen lived with Charles and until she was married to a respectable young

man—a joiner in the town, with whom Willie was apprenticed, though he still lived with Charles and Tamar. He grew up on the whole a good boy, though his high spirits and love of fun sometimes led him into mischief.

Miriam, who had always been a quiet, steady, handy girl, continued to live with Mrs. Benson for many a long year. At first, indeed, she had (after having been very much her own mistress at home since Katharine's marriage) found it hard to submit to the head nurse, and Katharine had some trouble to persuade her that it was her duty to do so. She would continually go to her sister with complaints, but though Katharine always listened to her with kindness, she never encouraged her, but always pointed out where she was to blame, and how many blessings she had. After a time, and by trying to do her duty, Miriam began to see the truth of all Katharine said to her, and before long complaints ceased, and Miriam was well and happy in her situation; and though for some years she was getting low wages, she never thought of leaving, or even asking for more; for Katharine had always said to her, "Mrs. Benson had the trouble of teaching you, and it would be very ungrateful of you to think of leaving for the sake of higher wages as soon as you have learned; besides, you should think more of a good master or mistress than of high wages."

In about four years, however, the head nurse married, and Miriam took her place, which she kept as long as there were children to be attended to; and when they had all grown up, she loved her master and mistress so much, and they loved her so much, that she never left them, but waited upon them as long as they lived.

Richard did not remain at home long after Charles's wedding, and it was with grief and anxiety that Katharine parted from him. His whole conduct

while he was at home, showed that his heart was not right with God—that the world, and the things of the world, were his great concern, and that his duty to God was seldom, if ever, thought about. One evening, too, when he had joined some old companions, and stayed late with them, Katharine was grieved and horrified to find when he came home that he was not sober; and though he seemed thoroughly ashamed of himself in the morning, when both John and Katharine spoke to him, he could not say it was the first time: he could only say he did not often get drunk. Notwithstanding all they could say, Richard did not seem to feel the *sin* of his conduct; and though Katharine recalled his father's death-bed to him, Richard was only softened for the moment, not really penitent.

No wonder, then, that it was with a heavy heart Katharine parted from her brother, for she remembered those awful words that neither 'thieves, nor covetous, nor *drunkards*, . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God;'^{*} and well she knew that a young man who once allows himself in intemperance, generally goes on from bad to worse, until he becomes a confirmed drunkard. It is like setting off a stone rolling down a smooth mountain side—once started, and it goes on and on, quickening its pace every moment, until it is plunged into the lake at the bottom.

But while her anxieties for Richard were great, she was easy about James, and thankful to see his steady perseverance in the narrow way.

From the time of James's going back to his master, a humble, penitent man, God prospered his way. He, too, insisted upon repaying any expense he had been to John and Katharine, and this he very soon did, and then, as I told you before, strove to do his duty in that state of life in which God had placed

* 1 Cor. vi. 10.

him. About a year after his trouble, Harriet married and left the town, and this was a great relief to him. It was soon after this that he began to see the beauty of Jane Bushman's character, yet much he feared to indulge in his love, because it seemed to him that he, a penniless young man, could never dare to ask that she might be his wife. Yet love grew in spite of all, and at length James saw he must do something; he must either leave, or speak, and much as he feared her father's refusal, love gave him courage to ask.

He asked, and was not refused. Mr. Bushman said it should depend entirely upon his daughter: if she loved James, *he* would not stand in their way. God had given him plenty, and he would admit James into partnership, so as to put him into a position to marry. Full of gratitude and hope, yet trembling hope, James told his love to Jane, only to be made more happy by finding himself, without doubt, the object of her love. All, indeed, did not run quite smoothly, for Jane had a severe illness, which put off the marriage for some time, and gave James many an anxious hour. It pleased God, however, to restore her, and not long afterwards they were married, and settled close to Mr. and Mrs. Bushman.

Jane was their only child, so that they were glad indeed to keep her near them; and Mr. Bushman, who was now getting on in years, and not very strong, was glad more and more to throw his business into his son-in-law's hands.

Thus James prospered, though life was not without its trials. Jane's health continued delicate, and they lost one or two children; but many blessings were left them, and they bent their wills to God's will.

We may say the same of John and Katharine. They were happy in the service of God, happy in *each other*, and God prospered the work of their *hands*, so that poverty did not come near them;

though, as their family increased, they had to work hard for their support, and were obliged to be very saving. Little Martha grew up a great comfort to her elder sister, for though she went out to service as soon as she was old enough, her affection and good conduct more than repaid all Katharine had done for her.

And so ends our account of 'The Elder Sister.' If it prove an encouragement to one placed in similar circumstances to strive earnestly, with God's help, to do her duty, we shall be glad indeed that it has been given.

'I think,' said Miss Walton, as she finished reading, 'that it should be a great encouragement to any elder sister; but much good as Katharine did by her *actions* and *instructions*, I am inclined to think her *example* went quite as far. Now any of you, though you are not placed in the authority she was, may set a good example, as she did; and a good example often goes a great way; and you, too, can show the same kindness, and love, and consideration to your brothers and sisters, and the same sympathy with them. Don't you think you can?'

'If we try, I suppose,' said Rose.

'Yes, if you try, asking God's help and blessing,' said Miss Walton; and presently afterwards she sent the maidens away.

And I, too, think my readers must have had story enough for one lesson, and, therefore, advise them to lay aside the book, and read the conclusion another time, where they will find some little account of the after-life of the Forley Maidens.

CONCLUSION.

I TOLD you that the Lessons on the Catechism were ended with the Forley Maidens before Anna and Frank were really engaged, and that whispers of their keeping company together had reached the ears of Mr. and Miss Walton. They were not, therefore, surprised, when on calling together at Mrs. Hickley's a few days afterwards, she told them of it.

'I think Anna has made a good choice,' said Miss Walton, 'for Frank seems a really religious youth, and I hope they will be happy. But they are both very young to think of marrying yet.'

'Oh! yes, Ma'am, they can't marry yet,' said Mrs. Hickley. 'Frank says he must go another voyage or two first. He does not think he's saved enough yet to marry upon.'

Of course Frank's leaving was a great trial to poor Anna, and it was not long after the engagement when he was obliged to join his ship again. A few weeks of happiness they had, and then came the sorrow of parting. Frank, however, cheered her up with promises of writing whenever he could. 'I shall be worse off than you,' he said, 'for I, perhaps, shan't get your letters. You must promise me not to fret, Anna, for if I think you fret, I shall be miserable.' Anna *promised, as well as she could through her tears, and, what is more, tried to keep her promise.* At first,

indeed, she found that sorrow, as well as pleasure, distracted her; and she was much tempted to sit with her work in her hands, but her fingers idle, indulging thoughts of her absent Frank. But this Anna knew would never do. She had learned that duty, common daily duties, must not be neglected to indulge sorrow, any more than to take unrestrained pleasure, and she made an effort to do whatever her hand found to do with all her might. She would not, either, give up her place in the Sunday-school for some time, though she was much laughed at by some for continuing to go; until after about six months, Miss Walton asked her to become a teacher instead of scholar. She did not like the change at all, but as Miss Walton asked it, she would not refuse, and her mother said,

‘Well, I think after all the trouble Miss Walton has taken with you, it’s only right you should help her, if you can.’

So Anna was installed Sunday-school teacher to the fourth class little girls, and very nicely she taught them.

Frank kept his word, and let her hear very often, and great delight his letters gave, proving, as they did, his unchanged love. Poor Anna suffered most in stormy nights, for she could not realize that perhaps the storm did not reach Frank; and she thought of his descriptions of the rolling vessel, until she was quite terrified, and one stormy day, even went up to the Vicarage to ask what Mr. Walton thought, whether a ship could live through such a storm?

Mr. Walton comforted her by assuring her that thousands of vessels would pass through it unharmed, and that very likely in the seas where Frank’s ship was, it might be quite calm.

‘But any way, Anna,’ he said, ‘you know he is in God’s safe keeping. You must pray to God to take

care of him, and then try and bring your mind to submit to God's will, whatever that may be. Your fretting won't make him any safer.'

'No, Sir, I know it won't, but oh! it would kill me if he was lost. I dare not think about it.'

'Nor should you trouble yourself by looking forward to it,' said Mr. Walton. 'Our Saviour says, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof;" but without doing this, you can try to say heartily, "Thy will be done;" pray God to help you to think of His will first in every thing, and then, (without anticipating evil,) if God sees fit to send it, you may trust that He will give you strength to bear it.'

It pleased God, however, notwithstanding Anna's fears, which sometimes got the better of her, to keep Frank from all danger; and at the end of two years after the engagement, he returned, having added to his little store of savings. Anna, too, had saved a little, and Frank now thought they need wait no longer.

The wedding was a very happy one, for Lucy came home for it, and most of Anna's old school-fellows were present, and Mr. and Miss Walton gave them a breakfast at the Vicarage afterwards. Mr. Walton himself married them, by Anna's own wish, and Miss Walton was at church, and very glad she was to see the happiness of one for whom she had felt so deep an interest.

Soon after, Anna bade good-bye to Forley, for she was now going to live at Portsmouth, where her husband's ship was stationed, and where he thought he could get work when not wanted on board.

It was not until after the birth of his first child—a little boy—that he was again called to sea, and this was Anna's first great trial in her married life, and one, poor thing, which she often had afterwards, for *Frank was sometimes absent for a year or more together.*

Sometimes Anna would come and stay with her mother during that time, or part of it; but her home continued to be at Portsmouth, so that she might be on the spot to welcome her dear husband whenever he came into port.

They had only two children, and Frank's earnings were good, so that they were very comfortable as far as the world went, and they were also happy in each other, faithful to each other during long absences. And, though the partings were great trials, they helped to keep in mind the world where there are no partings, and perhaps to look upon *that* world as the brighter home.

To another of the Forley maidens Frank's visit home also made a great difference, and that was his sister Sarah.

To him she told her troubles and difficulties, and he himself saw how hard it was for Catherine and Sarah to behave rightly towards each other, and how often they failed, though both, I believe, tried. There was something in Catherine's manner peculiarly irritating to Sarah, though very often quite unknown to Catherine; and then, if Sarah answered her sharply, as she still did at times, her sister could make no allowances for her, but would say and really think, with sorrow, that Sarah did not try to behave rightly. Yet Sarah knew she *did* try; that often and often she was silent, when sorely tempted to speak; and she thought it hard that Catherine gave her no credit when she did succeed, though she blamed her when she failed. I think if Sarah had looked more to God's approval, and thought less of whether man noticed it or not, these things would not have been so great a trial to her; and while her many failures would have humbled her, she would never have given up the struggle, as she was sometimes tempted to do, for days together; and then God's Holy Spirit would arouse her again, and deeply she

would sorrow over her weakness and falls, and resolve anew to begin the struggle. But then it seemed like always beginning, and she thought she gained nothing, and this made her down-hearted. But in this she misjudged herself; she *did* gain something every time a hearty effort was made, and notwithstanding her many falls, she was progressing, slowly it may be, along the narrow way.

One day, after being much tried, she was talking to Frank about it, and saying she felt as if it was no use trying, when, after telling her how wrong it was to say this, he continued,

'You *must* try, Sally. Sometimes our ship is beaten back by the waves again and again, but we don't say it's no use trying to get forward. We sometimes face the waves, sometimes tack about, but all the time we are trying to get on; and succeed, too, though perhaps slowly; and you must do the same.' Presently he added,

'I shouldn't wonder if you'd better tack just now. What do you say to going out to service? It wouldn't be all smooth then, for you would still have to fight against your temper, but perhaps you'd find it easier with somebody else than with Catherine.'

'Oh, I wish I could!' said Sarah. 'I've often thought of it, but Catherine has always thrown cold water upon it, and said I'm better off working at home, if I'd only believe it; that I wasn't fit to be trusted out at service, or something of that kind.'

'Well! I don't agree with Catherine,' said Frank good-naturedly. 'I should say you may be trusted as well as most girls of your age. I'll tell you what, Sarah, you'd better speak to Miss Walton about it, and I'll settle it with Catherine, and talk to William about it. I should like to see you in a good place before I go to sea again. Let's go home, (for they were walking together during the conversation,) and I'll talk to them about it.'

‘Well! you *are* in a hurry!’ said Sarah, laughing, as she turned round. ‘I’ll promise you Catherine will object.’ Sarah was not wrong in thinking Catherine would make objections; she did, and said that she was sure Sarah would not keep a place a month until she learned to govern her tongue better. Frank, however, over-ruled all objections, and at last, I believe, succeeded in persuading her it was the best thing Sarah could do, and application was immediately made to Miss Walton.

Not many days afterwards, Mrs. Hamilton wrote to Miss Walton, saying she wanted an under housemaid, and would try one of her girls, if she liked; and very glad was Sarah to accept the offered place. Before Frank went to sea again, he saw his sister safely with Mrs. Hamilton, and Sarah began what seemed like a new life to her. And there we may leave her at present, (though whether her history out at service is ever resumed by itself, depends upon many circumstances,) and turn to some of the other Forley Maidens.

Jane Grant we have not seen much of, poor girl, even during their lessons on the Catechism; for she never put herself forward in any way, and did not answer much; not so much as she could have done, as was proved in her illness. She was never strong, and was liable to attacks of sickness, which tried and weakened her; and as she grew older, they became more frequent. Neither Mr. nor Miss Walton thought she would ever reach womanhood, nor did she. She was confirmed at a Confirmation held a week or two before the Lessons on the Catechism were finished, when several of the other first-class maidens were also admitted, and afterwards partook of the Holy Communion, and in a quiet way went about her daily duties as long as she was able; and the fretfulness of her temper certainly very much decreased. But Jane never talked much, and few

knew what she thought or felt. This, however, did not at all dissatisfy Mr. Walton, when she came to be laid upon her sick bed, and he found her patient, and submissive to God's will, and humble in her thoughts of herself. It is not talking, it is doing, which proves whether or not we are fruitful living branches of Christ the Vine.

For about six months Jane pined away, until she became a mere skeleton, and then God, in mercy, took her to her rest, where she would be no longer subject to the ridicule and taunts of the unfeeling, but wait in security and peace the coming of her Saviour.

I wish I could give as good an account of Harriet; but a careless childhood leads, generally, to a careless girlhood, and still more careless womanhood. As long as she remained at home, she continued to come to school, but she wished to go out to service, and her mother found her a place with a farmer's wife to begin with. She did not, however, keep it very long, but was turned away for telling untruths, and then she went to another place in the town. There, having, I suppose, learned by experience, she stayed longer, until she grew discontented herself, and left; that she might, as she said, better herself. So she went on changing her places, either from her own restlessness, or from not giving satisfaction, until a labouring man was foolish enough to marry her; and the last I heard of her, was a sad account of their poverty, and her bad management.

I can give a very different account of Mary, whom we have always known as a little servant.

After bearing for two years with Hannah, and striving, notwithstanding the difficulty, to do her own duty, to be faithful herself, this trial was taken away, for Hannah left Mrs. Brooks's service. *Mary wondered who would come in her place, and hoped it would be some one who would help her to be good,*

and not be a hindrance, as she thought Hannah had been.

A week or two, however, went by, and no one came, and Mrs. Brooks (who was in much better health) did a good deal of work herself, and they seemed to get on very comfortably without a servant-woman; still Mary was much surprised, when one day Mrs. Brooks said,

‘Mary, I have been very much pleased with you ever since you came to us. You were to have served me for five years for your keep and clothes; but I think you deserve something more, for you have taken great pains to learn, and do your work well; so I am going to offer you Hannah’s place. I would not say anything about it until I saw how we could get on, but you have done so well the last fortnight, that I am not afraid to trust you. Do you feel able to undertake it?’

Mary was so much surprised, that she knew not, at first, how to answer; but at length she said,

‘Oh, Ma’am! I’ll do my best; but do you really mean that I’m to have wages?’

‘Yes, Mary, I do. I cannot give you the same as I gave Hannah the last year, because you are younger, and will not be able to do so much work; but I will give you five pounds a year, and then you must clothe yourself, and I shall give you what help I can in the work.’

Mary was delighted with the offer; she thought five pounds a year more than she could ever spend, and at once asked Mrs. Brooks if she would take care of what she did not want for her.

‘Yes: it shall go into the Savings’ Bank for you,’ returned her mistress; ‘but you’ll find it will take more than you think to get your clothes;’ and so it did, but not all: for Mary had come from the Union with good under-clothes, and Mrs. Brooks had been very kind in giving her things to keep her tidy out-

side, too. The first year she only spent three pounds, and two were put into the Savings' Bank, and each year afterwards that Mary was out at service, she added something to it, for she made up her mind she would not spend her earnings in finery. She was always neat, but never foolishly dressed.

It is hardly necessary to say of her, that she had been confirmed, but it was some time before she durst go to the Holy Communion. She was so afraid, she said, she should not do right afterwards. Mr. Walton, however, talked to her about it, and showed her that her fear ought not to keep her away from the offered strength and refreshment, but make her go regularly, as a person liable to faint would do all she could to prevent the fit coming on.

Tremblingly, she at length presented herself, and after that was never absent, when she could be spared; but from the time she took Hannah's place, she often was obliged to be away from church, and had to give up school entirely.

This, however, did not last very long. The work was found too hard for her, and Mrs. Brooks (who did not wish to keep two servants again,) said that, though she should be very sorry to part with Mary, she was sure she had better try and get an easier place.

The thought of leaving Mrs. Brooks, who had scarcely ever spoken a cross word to her, was a great grief to Mary, and she tried, longer perhaps than she ought to have done, to persevere in her work. Leaving Mrs. Brooks was the same sort of trial as Mary had had in her childish days about leaving Mrs. Howard; and, as then, at first she could not face it. She was very affectionate, and really loved Mrs. Brooks, (as indeed she had good reason to do, for a kinder mistress could not be,) and she had a great dread of going among strangers; no wonder, therefore, that she shrank from the idea of leaving her place.

When, however, Mary set herself to think in earnest what she *ought* to do, she felt that she must face the trial; that it was not right to stay with Mrs. Brooks when she could not do the work required from her, and by this means threw too large a share on Mrs. Brooks and her daughters. When once Mary saw this, she no longer hesitated, but asking leave to go and speak to Miss Walton, that same evening presented herself at the Vicarage.

‘Well, Mary, what do you want?’ said Miss Walton, as Mary stood at the parlour door. ‘Elizabeth said, I think, you wanted me, not Mr. Walton.’

‘Yes, Ma’am, please I came to tell you that—that I am going to leave Mrs. Brooks,’ she forced out, scarcely able to speak.

‘Indeed! I hope for no misconduct, Mary?’

‘Oh! no, Ma’am,’ she replied, recovering herself, ‘but I am not well, and the work is too hard for me. Mrs. Brooks told me so a month or two ago, but I tried to get on; but now I see I mustn’t try any longer. I must leave, for it throws so much work on others; and I thought, Ma’am, I would ask you if you knew of a place that would suit me.’

‘Do you really think, Mary, that it is *only* the place being too hard for you? or is there any other cause for your illness?’

‘No, Ma’am, I think it’s only the work. I am so tired at night I can’t sleep, and I can’t lift the heavy weights. I was very well till Hannah left.’

Miss Walton thought a moment, and then said,

‘Would you like to come and live with me, Mary?’

‘Oh! yes, Ma’am,’ she exclaimed, her whole face lighting up, and in a tone of such pleasure as Miss Walton had hardly ever heard from her before. ‘I should like it better than anything in the world!’

‘Oh! Mary, you won’t find it all so very bright,’ said Miss Walton, smiling. ‘You will have a great deal to learn if I decide to take you, and

very different work to what you have been accustomed to.'

'Please, Ma'am, I'll do my best to learn, if you will try me.'

'Elizabeth is leaving me in a week or two,' continued Miss Walton, 'and I think, perhaps, you would not find her place too hard for you. I will see Mrs. Brooks about it to-morrow, and hear what she says, and whether she gives as good a character of you as I hope she will.'

'Indeed, Ma'am, I'll do my best,' said Mary again, her eyes filling with tears, not now of sorrow, but of gratitude; and as she walked back to Mrs. Brooks's, she could not help thinking how wrong she had been to make herself so unhappy as she had in the thought of going among strangers, when perhaps, after all, she would not have to do it. God was very good to her, she thought, and she felt ashamed of her mistrust.

Miss Walton kept her promise, and saw Mrs. Brooks the next day; and also sent Mary to consult Dr. Benthorp whether there was anything really the matter with her, or whether it was only the hard work that had tried her too much.

Dr. Benthorp gave her a tonic, and said he had no doubt she would be quite well in an easier place; and so it proved; for after she had been with Miss Walton a few weeks, she looked quite a different girl. She took pains, and therefore soon learned her work; and visitors at the Vicarage often remarked to Miss Walton, 'What a nice, tidy, modest-looking girl your maid is!'

Of course Mary had her trials there as well as anywhere else; but I don't think she ever regretted going to live with Mr. and Miss Walton, nor did they ever regret having taken her, except it was when they had to lose her again, for then they felt that they should miss her so much.

They were not selfish enough, however, to wish to keep her, for Mary only left them to be married and to none other than our old friend, Edward Coote the first person who had spoken a kind word to Mary, when she arrived at Forley, an orphan, among strangers.

We will turn now to Mary's great friend, little Agnes, who, even as she grew up, still continued little and thoughtful. She was confirmed at the same time as her friend Mary, although she was younger than most of the candidates;—young in years, but not young in knowledge; and what was better than knowledge, she had an earnest and hearty desire to dedicate herself to God's service; and when Mr. Walton inquired what her conduct was at home, and heard that she was obedient to her father and mother, affectionate and attentive to her grandfather, kind and loving to her sisters and brother, he had no hesitation about admitting her.

A Sunday or two afterwards, she was among the number of the newly-confirmed who knelt to receive the pledges of their Saviour's love, and to fulfil His last command.

It was a bright Sunday, and joyfully—with a quiet, holy joy—little Agnes left their cottage to start for Church with her mother, who was also going to the Holy Communion for the first time. They had not, however, gone many steps, when her father suddenly jumped over a field-gate into the road just before them with a gun in his hand. Mrs. Daman sighed as she saw her husband thus profaning God's holy day, and Agnes's face clouded for a moment; but presently she brightened up, and said,

'We must pray for him, mother,' and as she passed him, she said,

'Oh! Father, won't you put away your gun, and come to church this beautiful day?'

'No, child,' he replied, 'I'm going to shoot some

rooks for dinner to-morrow. You'll be glad when you eat them that I didn't go.'

'Oh! no, Father,' she replied, looking into his face with her thoughtful eyes, 'I would so much rather you'd come; do come this once to please me. I only want *you* to make me quite happy;' and seeing, as she thought, something like relenting in her father's face, she added, 'I'll wait for you while you put away your gun.'

'No, no,' he said, 'don't wait; I'll go with you this evening. There! that must satisfy you; run along;' and, without giving her time to say more, he walked on; not, indeed, with the quick, light step he had before, but somewhat hesitatingly, every now and then looking back at his wife and child, who were also going on their way—Agnes's joy, for a while, overcast, and Mrs. Daman's mixed largely with sorrow.

Perhaps it was the thought of her father which cast a shade of trouble over little Agnes's usually calm face all that morning service, even at the Holy Communion itself; and I am sure she would not forget to pray for him who had refused to come and pray for himself. The service, however, was over, and once more Agnes and her mother were about to tread the road to their own home, when, as the congregation came out of church, they saw a young man running past as fast as he could towards the town.

'What's the matter, William?' cried several, and without stopping, he shouted out,

'Daman has shot himself'

The bystanders looked round, hoping the words had not reached his poor wife. But it was too late; too plainly she had heard them; and her step trembled as she endeavoured to press on towards the gate, trying to speak, but unable to say a word. Agnes was by her side, looking very pale, but not so agitated; and on a neighbour's offering his arm to Mrs. Daman, saying,

‘You want help to get along. Don’t give way, perhaps it is not so bad as you think,’ Agnes in a low voice said,

‘Mr. Walton had better know,’ and slipped back to tell him. She just met him and his sister at the church door, and though her pale face and colourless lips proved how much she was suffering, she managed to say quite clearly, ‘Father’s shot himself, Mr. Walton; will you come?’ and then hurried on after her mother; but not so quickly as Mr. Walton, who, telling his sister she had better go on home, hastened, accompanied by Mr. Spencer, in the direction so many were taking, and soon came up to little Agnes.

‘Where is your father, Agnes, do you know?’ asked Mr. Walton, as he took her by the hand to help her forward.

‘I don’t know, Sir. Ask somebody.’

‘You’d better go home, Agnes,’ said Mr. Walton; ‘I’ll go to your father.’

‘I must go, Sir, where Mother goes,’ she replied. ‘Look at Mother. I’m sure she’ll faint.’ And Agnes hurried up to her mother’s side, who now trembled so much, as scarcely to be able to walk.

‘Mrs. Daman,’ said Mr. Walton, with as much authority of manner as he could, ‘the best thing you can do is to go home and get a bed ready for your husband; whether he is much hurt or not, you should prepare.’ For Mr. Walton now saw, by the crowd in a field close by, that the wounded man was there, and he thought Mrs. Daman would hold up better if she felt she was of some use.

But it was now too late. The crowd opened, and on a gate, carried by half-a-dozen men, lay Daman, dead to all appearance, except that blood trickled from his wounded side, or rather breast.

The sight of him, however, instead of overcoming Mrs. Daman more, seemed to arouse her, and she

walked by the gate with steadier steps. In the bustle of this fearful scene, all seemed to forget little Agnes except Mr. Walton. He scarcely took his eyes off her, for her presence of mind, and face of suffering self-possession, astonished him. She did not scream when she saw her father; she compressed her lips together, and looked, if possible, paler than before; but she walked steadily on, watching her mother, and when she saw her mother's strength return, said to Mr. Walton,

'I'll go forward and see about the bed.'

Several went with her, and everything was found ready, even some old linen, and things which Agnes thought might do for bandages, laid out.

The hours that passed from the time the doctor came and gave no hope, until three o'clock in the morning, when the poor man died, were hours of great trial to little Agnes; but through all, her self-possession never failed her. She passed her time between standing near her father's bed, and kneeling in her own little room in prayer. And she knelt and joined in the prayers offered up either by Mr. Walton or Mr. Spencer with the wounded man, as, every now and then, a little abatement in his sufferings enabled him to attend. But if ease came to his body for a few moments, his distress of mind was only greater. Now, when it was too late to amend, the sins of his past life, and his neglect of religious duties, rose up before him, and he once groaned out, 'Oh, that I had gone to church this morning when she asked me!'

This speech of her father's seemed to try Agnes's composure more than anything.

Either Mr. Spencer or Mr. Walton was with him from the beginning to the end; and when he had breathed his last, Mr. Walton stayed a little while to try and comfort the distressed family.

Even then, when Mrs. Daman's spirits entirely

gave way, Agnes held up, and helped to restore her mother; so that it was to her Mr. Walton said as he left the house,

‘God bless you, and continue to strengthen you. It will, all your life long, be a comfort to you to remember that you did your best in this hour of trial, and have been a support to *all*.’

From that day, however, a change came over little Agnes. The suffering she had gone through, and the restraint she put on herself, told afterwards; and week by week she grew thinner and paler, and her smiles had a sad pensiveness about them which told of a hidden sorrow. She grieved over her father’s death with more than common sorrow. The thought of his unpreparedness for his end was that which gave the deepest pang to both the widow’s and her heart. Far more frequently than formerly faintness would come over Agnes when she least expected it; sometimes it was checked, sometimes she fainted quite away. More than once she had to leave the church during service; and on Margaret’s going out shortly afterwards to see what was the matter, she found her weeping at her father’s grave. Yet through all this, she was her mother’s chief comfort and support. Miss Walton often said she believed if it were not for her mother, Agnes would surely die; but it seemed as if she struggled, as it were, to live for her mother’s sake; and weeks, and months, and years, went by, and still the pale, pensive, yet far from unhappy-looking girl, might be seen at church with her mother or grandfather, or leading her little sisters to school; or sitting at her work in the sun; or reading aloud in an evening from the large family Bible.

Agnes’s love for Mary never waned, and she looked most like her former self when sitting with Mary in Mr. Walton’s kitchen, as she often did on Sundays; for the walk to her own home and back

twice was too much for her; so she often stayed for evening service either at the Vicarage, or with some of her schoolfellows.

Notwithstanding Agnes's delicacy, she was spared to grow into womanhood; and then Mr. Walton recommended her to a neighbouring clergyman, as an assistant in an infant school. Her mother moved into this parish, leaving Matthew living with the farmer for whom he worked; and the last I heard of Agnes, she was still at this school, beloved by the little scholars, and still her mother's best earthly comfort, and her grandfather's chief stay. He had moved with them, and was now a white-haired, tottering old man, and quite blind.

But while the delicate Agnes lived, one of her schoolfellows, whom we have always known as strong and healthy, was early cut down.

Alfred Mason's death was not lost upon his sister Bessie. She had been, up to that time, in Miss Walton's class, and had been confirmed; but when the time came for going to the Holy Communion, had drawn back, and did not communicate; and, indeed, on the whole, Mr. Walton had been so little satisfied with her, that he could not urge it, though there had been nothing in her conduct to warrant his refusing her a confirmation ticket; and then, directly afterwards, came little Alfred's last illness and death, and Bessie gave up attending the Sunday-school.

Notwithstanding all Bessie's thoughtlessness and positive faults, there had always been a something about her, I believe it was her candour, which had made Miss Walton hope well for her; and yet, on the whole, it was with much dissatisfaction, and many fears, that Miss Walton saw her leave the class; and she took an opportunity, a few days after little Alfred had been laid to rest, to speak to Bessie about the death of her brother, and strove to lead her to follow his good example. Miss Walton

thought at the time that Bessie took her words differently to usual, and hoped they might do good.

After that, both Mr. and Miss Walton were glad to see her regular at church; at least as regular as her home duties would admit of; and they did not notice her standing about as of old. She was in deep mourning, so that her dress could not be gay, and altogether there certainly seemed an improvement in her. One winterly night, about two months after Alfred's death, Bessie was at church, and Miss Walton remarked to her brother afterwards that she did not think she was looking well.

'She certainly looked very pale,' answered Mr. Walton; 'but I suppose it's the black clothes which make her look so;' and they thought no more about it.

It was not, however, a fortnight after that, when Margaret came up to the vicarage one evening to say Bessie was very ill, and wanted to see Mr. Walton; and then they learned that she had taken cold that night, when she was not well, and had never been out of the house since; 'and now, Sir, she's very bad,' said Margaret.

Mr. Walton hastened down, and it was some hours before he returned. When he did, the expression of his countenance made Miss Walton sure, without inquiry, that Bessie must be very ill; she asked, however, immediately,

'How did you find her?'

'Oh! Maria,' he replied, 'you will be shocked when I tell you. I fell in with Doctor Benthorp going down, and he said one lung has gone, and that she is dying of rapid consumption; he cannot do any thing for her.'

'Is it so indeed!' exclaimed Miss Walton with sorrow and surprise. 'She has always seemed so strong and well, except for an occasional cough. It is sad indeed! But does she know her danger?'

‘Yes, she knows it now. I would not pretend to hide it from her.’

‘Then did she suspect it before?’ asked Miss Walton.

‘Yes, she said nobody would tell her, but she thought it was so, and then she hid her face and sobbed.’

‘Poor girl! I fear the thought of death will be alarming to her, she has always seemed so thoughtless.’

‘She is not thoughtless now,’ said Mr. Walton, ‘nor has been, as far as I could judge, since Alfred’s death. Everything has been different to her since then, she says, and she was trying to do better, and now it is all cut short, and she must die. She wants to see you very much,’ he added in a moment, ‘for there are several things she cannot be happy until she has confessed to you, she says. I promised you would go to-morrow.’

‘Indeed I will, poor girl! I’m very grieved! And do you really think she is sorry for her past careless life?’

‘Yes I do; she bade me tell you she was. “Tell Miss Walton,” she said, “I’m very, very sorry I did not mind her teaching more, and ask her to come and see me.”’

Miss Walton said nothing for a few moments, she felt too much to speak, and Mr. Walton added, ‘The reason I have good hope that her repentance is real, is, because she was not satisfied with a general confession that she had been careless, but one after another she confessed particular wrong things that she had done, and felt, and for each sin seemed heartily to sorrow.’

‘We cannot be too thankful for this,’ said Miss Walton.

‘Indeed we cannot,’ returned her brother. ‘Better to rise and go to her Father at the eleventh hour, than not at all.’

A very short time had poor Bessie in which to perfect her repentance, but as far as man could see, that little time was not given to her in vain.

It was but one short week from the time Mr. Walton had been called to see her, before Bessie's last hour came; but in that week she had mourned over the sins and omissions of her past life, and confessed them most humbly. To Miss Walton she told many things which she felt had been sins against her, of which before Miss Walton knew nothing, and we may mention particularly, repeating the story from the forbidden book, and afterwards leading Ruth into sin about it. She begged to see Rose, and asked her forgiveness for the false report about looking into the letters, and the bad feeling towards her, which she said she very often had. She was strangely changed from the high-spirited, haughty girl we have always known her, into a deeply sorrowing, humbled penitent.

And such she continued to the last; she did not despair, but had a good hope of mercy through Christ her Saviour, and humbly and thankfully she received the Holy Communion twice before her death; but her end seemed to lack the peace and childlike confidence of little Alfred's. She had so much to do in that short week, amid pain and weakness; but she did her best: and we may have good hope, as she had, that her repentance was accepted, and her pardon sealed, and a place prepared even for her in our Father's house, where are many mansions.

We will turn from her to Emily, whom we have already seen well nigh restored from the dead. Though she had so far conquered her dislike to needle-work as to do it cheerfully, she never really loved it. She still preferred nursing a baby, or helping at a farm-house, as she occasionally did, or any active employment; and as she had now grown quite strong again, Mrs. Freeward said if she could hear

of a good place Emily should go to it. It was with very different feelings Emily now thought of going out to service. The prospect did not look so bright as before, and the leaving home, instead of being one of the inducements, was now a very painful thought. Still, on the whole, her wish for service remained, and she was greatly pleased, on many accounts, when her mother heard of a clergyman's wife, not very far off, who wanted a girl to nurse her first baby, now a few weeks old.

'If she's a nice lady I should like to go very much, Mother,' she said; 'but won't you ask Mr. or Miss Walton if they know her?'

'I have done so already,' said Mrs. Freeward. 'I called at the Vicarage as I came down from town; and they say that they believe she is a very nice lady. Mr. Taylor has only had the curacy of Danford for a few months, but Mr. Walton has met him once or twice, and Miss Walton has met Mrs. Taylor once, and they liked what they saw of them, and they hear that they are both very kind to the poor, and take a great deal of pains with the schools.'

'Well, Mother, I think I should like it very much,' said Emily. 'You know I like nursing a baby.'

Accordingly, the next day Mrs. Freeward went over with Emily to Mrs. Taylor's, about ten miles off, Mr. Mason kindly lending them a cart and horse, to see them half way there, and to fetch them the same distance back in the evening, and Emily's brother drove them.

When they reached Danford, and inquired at a shop for Mr. Taylor's, they found that he and his wife lived in lodgings; but they heard their praises sounded by the woman who kept the shop, though she said she thought they had not much money to spare, and she did not think they could give much wages. Mrs. Freeward, however, did not mind this; and presently afterwards, she and Emily stood in

Mrs. Taylor's presence. She sat in a small parlour very plainly furnished, and was herself dressed most simply, and the baby was lying on her knee. Her voice, however, and manner of speaking, at once told that she was really a lady; and there was something in her kind expression of countenance which immediately drew Emily to her, and she thought within herself, 'I am sure I shall like Mrs. Taylor.' She seemed equally pleased with Emily, whose love for babies could not be hidden even by her shyness; for when Mrs. Taylor told her to come close, and look at it, she went quite down upon her knees by the lady's side, saying,

'You dear, beautiful, little thing,' and kissed its little hand.

And, indeed, it was a very beautiful baby—as fair as a lily, with large blue eyes, and pretty, long, flaxen hair, and Emily fancied that, young as the baby was, she smiled upon her.

'Well, Mrs. Freeward, if Miss Walton gives me a good character of Emily, I think we shall get on very well together,' said Mrs. Taylor. 'If she is obedient, and truthful, and will try to please me, I will do my best to make the place comfortable and happy for her; though, as I warn you, she may not always find it comfortable with the people of the house. However, she will not have much to do with them; her time will be fully occupied in waiting upon us, and minding the baby.'

And Mrs. Taylor kept her word. In a fortnight from that time, Emily was established as nursemaid, and to wait upon Mr. and Mrs. Taylor; and while she tried faithfully to fulfil her duties, Mrs. Taylor was a kind friend to her.

Emily had been at her situation a year when she came home on a visit; and, I think, if we join her as she sits at work with her mother and sisters, and listen to what she says about her place, we shall how she got on.

'Oh mother!' she said, 'you can't think what a dear baby that is. It is the dearest, best little thing that ever was born.'

'I thought it very pretty,' said her mother.

'Oh! it was nothing then to what it is now! People stop me when I am out walking with her to look at her, and they all say she is so beautiful, and then I feel so proud of her.'

'I thought her like her mother,' said Mrs. Freeward.

'So I think, but most people say she is like Mr. Taylor, but I'm sure she's like mistress for being good. Oh! mother, you can't think what a kind lady she is. She spends a great deal of time in the nursery working for her baby, and she talks to me so kindly, and when she does find fault, she always speaks as if she'd rather not—as if it gave her pain; and then she reads with me every Sunday, and lets me write a copy once or twice a week, and sometimes she makes me read out to her, while baby is asleep, because she says it's good for me; and then she's so kind for letting me go to church whenever she can. You see one of us is obliged to be at home always.'

'Well! my dear child, you can't be too thankful for such a mistress,' said Mrs. Freeward, 'and indeed you ought to be very careful to mind her in everything, and do your duty to her.'

'Yes, Mother, I'm sure I wish to do so; I'm always so sorry when I've vexed her. You know, Mother, when we sit at work, we stick our pins into our dresses, and I had got so used to do it, that I couldn't mind not to do it. She told me not at first, and I didn't mean to do it, but I so often forgot, I did it without thinking; and one day I scratched the baby. Oh! I was so sorry; I did cry about it!'

'Well, and was Mrs. Taylor very angry?' asked Margaret.

'No, I was going to tell you. At first I didn't

know what to do, for she always said she should be so much displeased if baby did get a scratch, after she had spoken so often, and I wondered whether she would find it out, and what she would do.'

'Why you would not leave her to find it out, would you, Emily?' said her mother.

'At first, Mother, I was so frightened, I thought I dar'n't tell. She was out at the time, and didn't hear baby cry. The scratch was under the sleeve of her dress, for I was changing it, and I thought perhaps she would not see it; but before she came in, I remembered what you said about always confessing a wrong thing, and I remembered she had once said, "If you do wrong, Emily, be sure you always tell me; then I shall not be so displeased, and I shall be able to trust you again; but if you hide things from me, you know I shall feel no confidence in you." So I thought I would tell, come what would, and the first words I said to her when she came in, were, "Oh, Ma'am, I've scratched baby's arm," and to tell her all about it, and how sorry I was. Well! Mother, would you believe it, she did not say one word of blame at first, but the tears came into her eyes when I showed her the great scratch. I'm sure it made me cry more than if she'd scolded ever so much; but presently, when I said, "Will you ever forgive me?" she answered, so kind and gentle, "Yes, Emily, I will quite forgive you, as you have told me so openly. I think you have suffered enough to teach you to be more careful; but I wish you had remembered what I have so often told you of without this lesson. I don't think you will forget again, will you?"'

'Well, that was kind!' said Margaret, while Mrs. Freeward was in her heart thanking God that her child had had the courage to do right, and then said, 'I don't think you would forget again.'

'No, Mother, indeed I didn't; and I *did* feel so sorry I hadn't tried more to remember before.'

'It would have been better, certainly, my child. But I hope the scratch wasn't very bad.'

'It did keep sore for some time, baby has such a tender skin, and I used to feel so sorry whenever I saw it. It kept it in my mind for weeks, while the mark remained.'

'And is your master kind, too?' asked Margaret.

'Oh, yes, very; but he is such a silent gentleman, not a bit like Mr. Walton. He's out a great deal, and he reads or writes almost all evening, and mistress sits by him at her work, or reading too, looking so happy. I like to go into the parlour and see them together. Sometimes he reads out to her what he's written, for I went in one day and he didn't stop while I put coals on the fire, and I thought it was a book he was writing.'

'Well, my dear child, you'd better not talk about that, because it is their private concern, and you should never talk of their concerns to anybody.'

'No, Mother, I never have to anybody before, only I hope it is a book, and that they will get some money by it, for I'm sure they have very little. Mistress does work so hard; she does everything for herself and master, and the baby too, except what I do.'

'Then you have needle-work still,' said Margaret, laughing.

'Oh, yes! plenty; mistress will never let me be idle, and I'm sure I shouldn't like to see her work so hard and not help her.'

'I was going to say, Emily, if you think they are so poor, you should try and save them as much as you can.'

'Yes, Mother, Mrs. Taylor tells me so; for I once *spoiled* a dress of baby's by upsetting some medicine upon it, and she said baby would have to do with

one less, for they couldn't afford to get another. I was so sorry about it, for I wasn't minding what I was doing, or I shouldn't have done it.'

'I used to think,' she continued in a moment, 'that all gentlefolk had plenty of money, like Mrs. Eaton, who never seemed to care how much she paid for a thing; and at first when I went to Mrs. Taylor's, I wasn't a bit careful. I did not care how many things of baby's there were for the wash, and I didn't take care of her clothes; but Mrs. Taylor talked to me about it, and I see now that they have very little money; and yet I am sure if ever there were gentlefolk they are. Oh! I was so angry once (and I told her my mind too,) to hear Mrs. Corbin (that's the woman they lodge with) call them stingy because she said every scrap must be taken care of, and that Mrs. Taylor worked as if she had to make her living, instead of paying poor folk for doing it for her.'

'Well, dear, it wasn't right to say so,' remarked Mrs. Freeward; 'every body knows their own concerns best; but I don't think you would do any good by being angry, and telling your mind.'

'No, I suppose not; for it only made Mrs. Corbin very angry, and she said she'd turn them out of her house if they did not turn me away. I was so frightened, but I never heard anything more of it afterwards.'

'My dear child, I hope you will be careful not to do anything of this kind again. You may make your master and mistress very uncomfortable; and, besides, it is your duty to be respectful to Mrs. Corbin, as well as to everybody else above you.'

'Oh! Mother, I cannot abide her,' said Emily. 'I don't know how Mrs. Taylor has patience with her.'

'I am sure, Emily, if she has patience, you have no right to complain. She has a great deal more to do with her than you have.'

The conversation was here broken off by the entrance of Mr. and Miss Walton; but Mrs. Freeward thought over Emily's words afterwards, and not feeling happy about her manner of talking of Mrs. Corbin, and the account she gave of her behaviour towards her, took an opportunity, when alone with her child, of speaking seriously to her of the duty of submission, and how careful she should be not to make mischief, but, if only for Mrs. Taylor's sake, to be civil and obliging to Mrs. Corbin; and Mrs. Freeward then found out that *this* was Emily's greatest trial. However, she promised to do her best, and at the end of a fortnight (the time Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were away, and had sent her home) Emily returned to her place, where we will leave her, for I think we may feel very happy about her. Perhaps, if ever I am able to gather together more particulars of Emily at service, you may hear again of her.

Margaret's choice of life was very different. She was a stay-at-home, and never much more happy than when sitting quietly at home working with her mother, especially if Mr. or Miss Walton came in and sat with them for half an hour. Mrs. Freeward used sometimes to say, 'Margaret is the very best child I have,' and perhaps she was:—certainly the one who had given her mother the least anxiety, and seemed most truly to be walking in her mother's steps. Many would have thought Margaret's but a dull life, for Ellen was married, and Emily away, and Annie mostly kept at school, so that she had now no constant companion but her mother. Margaret, however, never seemed to feel it so; she was always bright, and cheerful, and self-forgotten. Her happiness consisted in making others happy; she knew her presence was a comfort to her mother, and this prevented Margaret's feeling dull. Sometimes, indeed, she sat with her Aunt Rachel, who still

lived, but was very infirm; sometimes she nursed a sick neighbour. Like Anna, too, she exchanged her place as a scholar to a teacher in the Sunday-school, though I believe if she had had her will, she would have been a scholar many a year longer.

There was one, however, upon whom Margaret's quiet home virtues were not lost. Long had Nathaniel Repton, (who, it may be remembered, was the teacher to the second-class boys,) loved and admired them, and much he wished to gain Margaret's love, and make her his wife. For some years, however, he kept his love quite to himself, for he was not in a condition to marry, as half his wages went to support his aged mother, and willingly he gave them. On the death of his mother, however, Nathaniel's thoughts at once turned to Margaret, and now he felt he might try to gain her love. This, however, was not so easy as he expected. Margaret was shy and reserved with him; she had always looked upon Nathaniel as so much older, and wiser, and better than herself, that even when he showed her the most attention, she could not believe it meant anything, and poor Nathaniel was nearly in despair. At last he ventured to ask her to be his wife, and Margaret refused. She liked him very much, she admired him, but she did not think she loved him, and she was surprised to find he loved her; she had not realized it, though he had done much to show it. Poor Nathaniel! He was very down-hearted, and the next day left the village, and sought work at a distance; he felt he could not bear to see her, with no hope of having her for his own. And when he had really gone, Margaret missed him, and began to think she *did* love him, and the longer he stayed away, the more this feeling grew. She thought she had been unkind, hasty, to refuse him. She thought of all his attentions, and wondered she had not seen before that he cared for her; she

thought of his steadiness, how good and religious he was; she remembered what a kind son he had always been, and thought, 'Surely a good son would have made a good husband.' Thus Margaret's love grew. And how was it with Nathaniel? Was his dying? No; far from it. Though absent, Margaret's bright, kind face, was ever before him, and he too began to think he had been hasty to take her refusal; that perhaps if he had gone on trying, she would have yielded; and hearing about six months after his departure, that Lord Norgrove wanted an under-gardener, he applied for the place, thinking he should then be close at hand, and could watch Margaret, and see if there was any hope of her relenting.

He gained the situation, and not two months afterwards, Margaret and Nathaniel were engaged; and when they were married, not very long afterwards, Nathaniel took a cottage close by Mrs. Free-ward's, and there they lived, so that even after her marriage Margaret could hardly be said to leave her mother. She was always at hand in time of need; and even after her own family were about her, and she had many household cares, she continued the affectionate daughter, the kind neighbour, the willing helper of all whom it was in her power to assist.

I believe Nathaniel never ceased to congratulate himself upon the wife he had chosen, and I don't think Margaret ever satisfactorily answered the question she often asked herself, 'Why she had ever refused him, when he was the best husband in the world?'

We will now turn to Rose Lunn. Her mother much wished her to be brought up as a school-mistress, and both Mr. and Miss Walton thought it a very suitable employment for her, and one that Rose would fulfil conscientiously; and therefore they had long employed her in the school-room to assist Miss Tule, and given her instruction themselves; and Mrs.

Lunn hoped and hoped that her father would have been able to afford to put her to the training-school, when she was of the right age; but as the time drew near, it seemed less and less likely, for work was very slack, and Lunn spent much in drink, which, had it been laid by, would soon have amounted to the sum required. Mrs. Lunn, indeed, often had hard work to feed and clothe her large family, and was glad of Rose's small earnings at Forley school to help out. Rose might have earned much more at glove-making, but Mrs. Lunn would not take her away, still hoping against hope that in the end Rose might go to the training-school, especially as Mr. Walton had promised some help.

The future, however, was thus uncertain, when a friend wrote to Miss Walton to inquire whether among her 'maidens' there was one fitted to wait upon a lady confined almost entirely to the sofa? She wanted a girl who could read to her, and of nice gentle manners, who would be almost constantly with her: and Miss Walton thought immediately of Rose—thoughtful, quiet, steady, *wise*, little Rose, and proposed it to her mother.

'Well, Ma'am, it will be a disappointment to both me and Rose herself if she is not a school-mistress, but I don't think I ought to reject such a good offer, if you think Rose will suit; and I am sure, Ma'am, I am very much obliged to you for thinking of her. I will talk to her father and her about it, and I will let you know, Ma'am.'

'One thing more I will tell you, Mrs. Lunn, which will perhaps help you in your decision,' said Miss Walton. 'My friend tells me that Miss Archer, though so much of an invalid, would take pains with any girl, and teach her as she was able; so that, after all, perhaps Rose may get on with her learning as well as at

school, and in the end may be able to put herself to school, if she tries to save her wages.'

The end was, that Rose went to wait upon Miss Archer; and though at the time it was a disappointment to her to give up the prospect she had so long cherished, she did not attempt to oppose her parents' wishes, only determined in her own mind to lay by and put herself to school, as Miss Walton proposed. Years, however, went by, and I always heard of her being still with Miss Archer, happy in the love and confidence of her mistress, and nothing, she said, would tempt her to leave her while Miss Archer lived. She every now and then sent home presents of money or clothes to her parents, or brothers and sisters, and wrote very constantly, but could not get to see them, the distance was so great, and Miss Archer, she said, was not fit to be left.

A letter, however, of Miss Archer's to Miss Walton, or part of it, will perhaps, better than anything, show you how Rose really got on. It was written about two years after Rose had first gone to her.

'I have still the same good account to give of my little maid. She is all I could wish, and I cannot tell you the comfort I find in her. She is so thoughtful and gentle, both which are so valuable in a sick room. She is, too, so trustworthy. I don't mean merely in her duties, but about anything she hears or sees. She never makes mischief, and if she is placed in a difficulty, she steers through it so wisely.

'Indeed, I cannot be too much obliged to you for sending her to me. I find her more than a servant, a really valuable companion, and my only fear is, lest I should spoil her; but though she is with me constantly, reads to me, writes for me, goes messages, settles difficulties, she knows and keeps her own place all the time.

'I believe *the secret* of all is her true religion—that

she simply puts before her her duty to God, and this keeps her right in everything. I have much conversation with her, and her calm, straightforward manner of looking at what is *right* in anything, I always admire very much. The few faults I have mentioned before, and those of which you told me, she guards against, and is subduing by degrees. I think, too, she gets on very well in her studies, and she is so quick, that it is no labour to me to teach her anything.'

With this account of Rose from her kind mistress, we must be satisfied to leave her, at all events, for the present.

Her little sister, Ruth, tried, as far as she could, to supply Rose's place at home, though she felt very like a lost sheep for a long time after her sister went away. She took her place in the school also, but not showing the same taste for teaching, did not remain very long.

To the surprise of her mother, and almost all who knew her, she chose to be a dressmaker, and learnt her business very well and quickly; and afterwards, she was able to live at home and work there; so that she was a great comfort to her mother while earning her own livelihood, and very proud she was when Miss Walton trusted to her to make her a dress.

You may be sure Ruth would take all the pains she possibly could, and succeeded so nicely, that Miss Walton, after that, often employed her.

We have now but to say a few words about Alice Churton, who, although she came late into the class, has, I hope, excited sufficient interest to make you wish to hear something of her also; while I have nothing remarkable to tell, yet I write with pleasure of her, as that which interests me most to tell of the *Forley Maidens* is, not so much what the state of life was into which God called them, as how they did their duty in it.

We have seen Alice Churton a busy girl at home, and busy she continued to be; for instead of there being less to do as the children grew up, there seemed to be more, and no sooner did one baby run alone than another came to be nursed. Yet each little one was loved in its turn, and Alice became its nurse. Some of her younger sisters went out to service as soon as they were at all old enough, but *she* could not be spared from home—the useful, elder sister the mother's right hand; and though, perhaps, occasionally Alice sighed as the same work came over and over again, and longed for a little rest and change, and thought her sisters better off at service, it was only occasionally. She was generally bright and good-natured, the friend of the little ones, happy, I believe, in the thought that she was doing her duty in that state of life unto which it had pleased God to call her.

She, too, was confirmed the first Confirmation after she was old enough. She was attentive and serious at the examinations, and acted, more than Mr. Walton knew at the time, upon the rules he gave to help their preparation: and when afterwards all were invited to the Holy Communion, Alice presented herself in the same simple spirit of obedience, and became as constant a communicant as her many occupations would allow.

Alice was not clever, but she was, what is far better, trying humbly and quietly to do her duty; and though she attracted but little notice, was seldom seen anywhere but at church, and busy at her own home. Mr. and Miss Walton always felt she was one of those who will not lose their reward; whose good deeds, unseen by the world, are marked and remembered by our Father in Heaven, who seeth in secret, and will Himself one day reward *openly*.

A few parting words I must say to my readers, who are, or have been, Sunday scholars.

If to *you* the school and after life of these Forley Maidens have an interest, what do you think they had to Mr. and Miss Walton? Do you think their conduct out of school was a matter of no interest to them?

When they left the class, do you think they were forgotten and uncared for?

Well now think, each one for herself, whether, if you are still a scholar, you are trying so to act upon the instruction you receive, as to be giving joy or sorrow to your teacher and clergyman. If you are not satisfying them, you may be pretty sure you are not pleasing God. If you have left school and have entered upon life, are you so carrying out your school instruction as to bring joy to your teacher's and your clergyman's heart when they hear of you? It is of little use to sow good seed, unless it grows and bears fruit unto life eternal. I have known the teacher who, years and years after she had been separated from her Sunday class, did not cease to pray for them, to rejoice when she heard that any one was walking in the good and the right way, and sorrow if she heard of any one who forsook it.

Such an one may be praying for you! Your school days may be over: perhaps you are at service, perhaps a mother, perhaps working at a mill, or busy at the toils of your needle.

Should you not like to think you were remembered by her who taught you years ago?

Should you not like to think you could give her pleasure?

Try, then, to act upon the good instruction you received in childhood; try to act upon the holy lessons then taught you, now in the midst of the cares of this life, and let not all the prayers offered

up for you be in vain. Then, perhaps, though you may never meet in *this* life, hereafter you *may* meet, and be to her a joy and crown of rejoicing, and spend together the days of eternity in the presence of our Father. Amen.











100

